Reservation : a Pie in the Sky

Prof. C. PARVATHAMMA, M.A., Ph.D.,

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RESERVATION: A PIE IN THE SKY

(RESERVATIONS GENERATING A CRISS - CROSS OF KURUBA CASTE AND TRIBE IN KARNATAKA)

By

Prof. **C. Parvathamma,** M.A.,Ph.D.,

Publisher

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Dedicated in Memory of

I.P. DESAI

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

In Indian society, where castes, communities and tribes are large in number, providing justice to everyone becomes a very important political decision. Reservation for weaker sections, dalits and tribals are important but should be managed properly in order to meet the desired goal. Otherwise the vested groups will benefit at the cost of others. Reservation without proper identification and implementation becomes a tool for exploitation by a few intelligent and shrewd communities.

In Karnataka, communities racing for scheduled tribes tag is a phenomenon. The castes and communities are now considering themselves as tribes and demanding for scheduled tribes reservation benefits. The parties coming to power in the state are assuring and recommending such powerful groups for ST reservation. This has become a big business in politics. In Karnataka several backward communities are demanding for ST reservation and some are using it from the back door. Hence the real tribal communities are deprived of their constitutional rights. The powerful interest groups are capable of competing and influencing the parties in power.

Prof.C.Parvathamma is a well known academic and writer particularly in the field of Sociology, Anthropology and Social work. Her clarity in thinking in social development is far reaching. She advocates reservation only for the needy and it should not be a permanent feature. It kills the creativity and self-respect of the persons who depends on reservation permanently. Now for benefits the race for reservation is increasing. Several strong and large communities are making their efforts to influence the Governments to get into the scheduled category. The author in her book "Reservation: a pie in the sky" has expressed her surprise and shock that castes and communities are claiming as tribes even after several decades of reservation facilities. The tribes should have been converted into

communities due to reservation facilities and special support. But they are not in a position to compete with the communities to make use of the reservation facilities. If the Governments are not alert and committed to provide justice to the needy, the reservation benefits will go to influential and powerful communities. The real needy will be sidelined. And there by purpose of reservation is not met. Communities racing for scheduled tribes tag is increasing day by day in the country. There are about 1200 communities, amounting to crores of population, demanding and waiting for scheduled tribes tag at the door steps of Central Government. They are making all efforts to influence the Government in power to grab reservation benefits. No criteria as per the anthropological survey of India, has been followed while identifying the tribes and communities under scheduled tribes. If these 1200 communities are recognised under the ST category all most $^{1}/_{3}$ of the country's population come under ST category, thereby the real adivasis will be sidelined and further marginalised. The adivasis belong to food gathering culture and living in harmony with the nature. But the dominant communities who are demanding for ST tag are well within the dominant culture with consumer values and competitive and exploitative in nature. If these dominant communities are allowed to avail benefits under ST category the tribal life will be miserable and no where in the seen. Let there be reservation for scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, other backward communities and minorities for a specific period to help the needy to come up socio-educationally and politically. Within these categories, there should be strict administration to control persons who are benefited from reservation not to use reservation benefits again and again. For the present within these categories, the elite class are getting maximum benefits leaving the real needy as they are.

This book is a guide for Governments, academic institutions, researchers, social activists and the public who are interested in social justice to understand the concept, the practice and the limits of reservation.

We appreciate the author for having shown courage to write this book "Reservation: A pie in the sky" at the appropriate time. We thank M/S Pragati Graphics Bangalore for nice printing and Mr. N. Chandrashekar for cover page art.

The parliament, now, has amended constitution to provide reservation for SC/ST for another ten years. At least now the Government strictly administer reservation benefits for the needy.

December 99
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S. Sreekant
DIRECTOR

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This Study has been made possible by the award of a research grant from the Indian Concil of Social Science Research, New Delhi, during 94-95. I Thank the authorities for this and the Director for allowing some Extra time to submit the final report.

My special thanks to Prof. Roy Burman for having Evaluated the original report, approved it's publication with a slite change in the title from the original.

Before formulating the proposal, I discussed the subject with a few former colleagues of mine. Dr. Satyanarayana, Department of studies in Sociology, Manasa Gangothri, evinced interest in the study and spared time and efforts, discussing with the research project staff about field work, coding, tabulation and later by going through the draft, offering suggestions. I thank him for all his assistance.

Dr. Paresh Kumar, Department of Sociology, Manasa Gangothri assisted at the begining by getting the schedules printed and supplied on time. Some research investigators, initially came to work in the project on his suggestions. Also, Dr. Y.S. Sidde Gowda, Department of Social work, Manasa Gangothri, assisted in the preparation of some tables along with the research staff. I record my thanks to both, who also happen to be my former colleagues.

Finally, my thanks are also due to the numerous Kuruba and Kadu Kuruba informants, without whose co-operation the study would not have reached this stage preparation of a report and its publication later on. It is the present and future generations of these two groups which need to know the intricacies of the proplems that are presented and analysed. I thank the community of respondents for having spared their time and cooperated with our research staff.

The research staff, inspite of problems, did a good job. While on work many have come and gone, not one investigator could stay

till the very end. The reason is simple. Because the scales were too low, while the work was demanding. More remunerative green pastures opened up elsewhere, they migrated. In spite of these problems, the project work as such was not hampered.

There has been some delay in getting the manscript ready for publication. But I have endeavoured to stem the constraints, largely with the hope that the findings of this empirical study will help evolve new strategy so as to render `reservation policy' rational and respectable. The intelligentia - academicians, policy makers and administrators should work to redem the nation from getting trapped in populism. The ideals of a `just society' minus the snobbaries of castism, communalism and corruption should become the goal.

Thanks to S. Sreekant, Director Deed and team for having taken interest in publishing this Book. I remember Artist K. Chandrashekar, Cover page Designer M.N. Prakash, R. Nagaraj and Dr. M. Byregowda who did D.T.P. and printing work.

Prof. **C. Parvathamma,** M.A., Ph.D.,

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CHAPTER I

SECTION – A

INTRODUCTION

Early 1980s witnessed a good deal of social unrest particularly in North India on the question of Mandal Commission recommendations regarding provision of "reservation" for Backward Classes. While in South Indian States, it did not visibly lead to clashes, as the BCs here were already enjoying the benefits for decades. But in the North violent reaction from students and youth did create a situation of turbulence. In the wake of this many Universities and Research Institutions organized seminars on reservation policy. However, it gave an opportunity to have a fresh look at the entire process, though nothing conclusive could be arrived at. Getting reservation benefits has almost become glamorous. Everybody drawn from across a cross-section of castes have begun clamouring for benefits of reservation.

While some groups found their way to BC, OBC, SEBC, still others wanted SC, ST tag. Reservation scheme operating in favour of SCs and STs since 1950 has lead to lot of heartburn to many non-SCs and non-STs. Quite often it has been abused and misused and people have simply passed off for SCs and STs. Organized pressure groups have also succeeded over the years to get included in the schedule. Thus the ramifications of 'reservation policy' contrary to the principle of upliftment of the poor, downtrodden and backward people has assumed the role of divisive force, whereby people are vying with one another for backward classes, SC, ST status.

The government has yielded to organized pressure groups and included them in one or the other category. This has encouraged many more groups to stake their claim for reservation benefits. It is still very much an ongoing process in the sub-continent. In Karnataka two caste-groups belonging to Sudra Varna have organized and pressing the government to include them in ST category. The study thus focuses attention on these organized efforts whereby castes want

to pass off for tribes, contrary to the process of tribes assuming caste forms in the past. The study concentrates on Kuruba caste-group and Kadu Kuruba tribals where caste-tribe criss-crossing appears imminent just for the sake of material benefits, while they are a world apart in reality.

The present study is an attempt to understand the differences as well as similarities if any between caste system and tribal organizations. Several such studies are made both in pre and post-independence India. Historically Tribal people have usually preferred to live and actually lived in somewhat inaccessible areas – near mountain range, foot hills, forest fringe areas. The location gave them certain amount of independence and freedom from interference from rulers and others. However, we get instances as early as Mughal rulers, that tribals were no longer able to live in absolute isolation from the outside world. Some of the Mughal rulers in their enthusiasm to extend the frontiers of the Empire overran tribal areas as well, specially in North India.

The British who succeeded the Mughals as an imperial power were not only interested in adding and consolidating the empire, more importantly they were interested in collecting the revenue to the British treasury. Tribal territories were annexed and revenue collection was initiated. It is during British period we also hear of many tribal rebellions. However, the British often quelled the disturbances and sometimes suppressed them. Often the British rulers did not interfere directly with the Tribals, but engaged the landlords or native chiefs to be in-charge of tribal administration mostly for collection of revenue. These headmen or native chiefs were rewarded for their services by the British. It is during the British regime legislation on forest was enacted. The forest wealth was of course a source of revenue. As the empire expanded its territorial hold in the sub-continent, land survey was initiated and classified. Cultivable land was taxed and regulations introduced. Zamindari, ryotwari holdings are but the brain child of British administration.

In post-independence India zamindari is legally abolished and land ceiling is enacted as a measure to regulate the size of the holdings. Tardy implementation coupled with a veriety of devices adopted by the owners to dodge the land ceiling Act is very much in evidence all over the country. Regularization of illegally cultivated land, occasionally undertaken by state governments is a good example. Land grabbing is a perennial problem, where the rich and the powerful get away with the booty. While the poor and the helpless are charged and often denied. This is exactly what is happening in almost all the tribal areas in the country. Not only the laws relating to forest conservation are made more stringent in recent years, the tribals are being deprived of their traditional habitat and means of livelihood. Shifting cultivation is banned, but rehabilitation and providing infrastructural facilities in new settlements is paid lip service. In this the role of the bureaucrats, forest officials, vested interests, contractors and government's dis-interest have been playing a shocking role. Human approach seems to be sadly missing in all this.

If Santal rebellion against British administration is past history, there are now too many agitations, dharnas and what not - undertaken by the Tribals in different parts of the country, Karnataka too is not lagging behind. During 1995, toddy/arrack contractors with the connivance of excise department staff beat up and harassed tribals, in Hunsur taluk because the tribals especially women opposed opening arrack shops in or near Hadis. The government announced introducing prohibition by stages. Post-ponement on implementation, now sounds like a trick played by the government on tribals. The government is unable to honour its own commitment. Far more serious events are on the anvil in National park area of Nagarahole forest and Bandipur 'Tiger reserve' area. In the latter area standing crops of the Tribals and villagers are destroyed recently (Jul-Aug. 96) by forest department personnel while tribal women and children not to speak of men are manhandled alleging, encroachment on forest land by illegal cultivation. In Nagarahole area Taj Group is raising a hotel – resort to promote tourism at the behest of government. This implies throwing out the

tribals lock, stock and barrel from the forest, causing environmental degradation, and a host of other problems that will follow leading to destruction among other things of wild life.

The tribals are viewing the entire process with dismay and they are desperately organizing to oppose the government move and Taj group plans. It is mostly Kadu Kurubas who will be displaced. Tribals in Mysore district backed by the NGO's have been pleading with the central government to implement the Bhuria committee recommendations, which helps them to hang on to tribal traditions and survive. An early decision by the government implementing the feasible recommendations and allowing the tribals to live in peace is a welcome proposition. Will the government take a human approach and prevent possible disasters? The government might suppress or even quell the agitation naming it as law and order problem. The tribals are not in a bargaining position. They are no where before the forces and power of government. But human misery will persist and unwittingly government might become a party to insurgency raising its ugly head.

True, since 1952, several developmental schemes have been introduced in the country. Most of them have had but negative impact. For instance the community development scheme, under which a wide variety of programmes were operating. But eventually the unintended consequences outweighed the intended results. The scheme had to be scrapped. Now we have the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) operating in the country side. How successful is the scheme and who are the beneficiaries is not very clear.

Compulsory education upto 14 years of age figure in the constitution itself. But it was given a goby till recently so as to swell the ranks the illiterates. Education being a state subject, the central government passed the 'buck' to state governments. Paucity of funds and general disinterest in compulsory free education by the political leaders and government directly encouraged the emergence of private educational managements all over, mostly as a money spinning

proposition. The business starts from kindergarten level and includes offering professional and technical courses of study for a price. While government educational institutions have reduced themselves to an appalling position. The gulf between the rich who could afford and get educated in private institutions and the poor who often languish and dropout at an early stage from government institutions, has at once lead to national waste as well as brain drain that is perceptible.

Adult literacy programme which was introduced midway and the 'Operation Black Board' programme, with its concomitant 'Saksharata Mission' is but a belated attempt on the part of the government to step up the number of literates. Entire districts are declared as literate. Even evaluation of the programme is done on dotted lines. But it is apparent that it is only a statistical enumeration while in reality it is a very poor substitute for compulsory education. While vast sums of money are spent, the general impression is that much of the funds have gone down the drain and corruption is pepped up.

It is true that increase in population has offset many of the developmental programmes. But the family planning, family welfare programme as well as health services are also dogged by problems. Over and above these, it is the populist measures adopted by successive governments that have virtually lead to phenomenal increase of not only problems, but drained the exchequer. Scams and frauds that are surfacing in the last few years would certainly lead to demoralization and produce debilitating effect on the national character and integrity.

'Loan Melas' floated by the congress government in the 1980s is an extreme example of populist move. The actual beneficiaries were middle men and very sparingly a little amount was received by the applicant, although it is again said, the application itself was forged by middle men promising the nominee financial assistance with very little risk. The net result is many nationalized banks which were pressurized to give loans, quite often were unable to recover the loan

advances. Wrong or false addresses of the borrowers simply amounted to daylight fraud. Yet no government showed any interest in checking or plugging it.

Lack of political will to enforce discipline has cost the nation dearly. With economic liberalization and globalization, things are going from bad to worse. Government promise everything under the sun. The citizens expect a lot more, but many of the promises remain on paper. The World Bank and International Monetary Fund, which have stepped in to help India carry on with the developmental activities has lead to lot of indebtedness. The nation seem to be at cross-roads, while on the threshold of 21st century.

The 'protective discrimination' policy ushered in 1950s, as a worthwhile measure to watch the progress of the downtrodden SCs and STs, has by fluke of unimaginative leaders turned the scheme into a most populist measure ever thought of in any other country which adopted reservation policy to certain segments of its population. These are not necessarily socialistic or programmes adopted as welfare measures in a welfare state. The National Health Scheme which was operating in Great Britain was certainly not populist. So also the Red Indian Community of U.S.A. which is entitled for certain assistance – hence reservation facility cannot be construed as populist, although occasionally some mal-practices might take place. But what is being done in the Indian context is a continuous addition of castes and tribes to SC and ST category. Additionally declaring a whole range of castes to be covered under BC, OBC and SEBC qualifying for reservation benefits.

The yardstick used in all these cases primarily is caste, while in some other cases, income is taken as an additional factor. The paper by P. Radhakrishnan, 'Mandal Commission Report : A Sociological Critique'[1] has pointed out the inherent drawbacks starting with the methodology. Small wonder that the four Backward Classes Commissions which have traversed Karnataka have raised only dust and heat but no solution. In 1950s committee headed by Dr. Nagana

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1. Caste, its Twentieth Century Avatar, 1996. Srinivas (Ed.,) See pp 203 - 220

Gowda excluded the Bombay Karnataka area, Lingayats from BC consideration and thus met with stiff opposition. In 1970s Havanur Commission, under the Late Chief Minister D. Devaraj Urs also excluded some Lingayat sub-castes, Bunts from South Canara (Dakshina Kannada District), of course Brahmins. Thus there were agitations. Akhila Bharata Veerashaiva Maha Sabha spearheaded the move. Then early 1980s Venkata Swamy Commission Report excluded some Okkaliga sub-castes. There was violent reaction from Okkaligas, so the report was shelved. Then Justice Chinnappa Reddy Commission came along whatever be the recommendations, the report is not discussed in the legislature nor is it published. It is put in cold storage and not even simmering. By bits, Karnataka evolved its own way of identifying and earmarking BCs for purposes of benefits. On the top of it Mandalization is modulated. So that the total reservation including SC, ST, BCs for sometime come to around 62 per cent or more. Of course Supreme Court Judgement is often invoked by disappointed candidates, seeking admission in professional courses or government jobs.

The issue will never be resolved at this rate and has succeeded in creating an atmosphere of bitterness among people who stand to loose the chance. In the neighbouring Tamil Nadu it is still worse. And it is here that BCs are a favoured lot since the time of Anti-Brahmin movement at the turn of 20th century. It is operating at least for 7-8 decades, but the consequences seem to be zero as the government itself dominated by Non-Brahmins is clamouring for a hefty figure of 67 per cent reservations in all, instead of 50 per cent limit put by the Apex Court.

So long as reservation is articulated in this manner, it cannot but be a great divisive force in the country. A whole range of castes, sub-castes, sub-sub-castes have emerged to lay claim to BC tag. Again there are other forms of demands put forth in different parts of the country. Responding to all these will open a pandorous box of problems that would not lead to the integrity but will play a more

disruptive role of dividing people on real and imaginary needs. The SC/ST reservation which is operating for more than 4 decades has faced retardation because of the problems of other people passing off and governments complacency over including additional groups in the schedule.

Unless a devise to de-schedule the sufficiently advanced, households and individuals, the reservation system as it is operating now, with all the accompanying ills is bound to continue. The brazenness with which the scheme is misused by quite well-to-do people thereby effectively blocking the really needy and deserving who does not even know that a scheme like this exists and is operating amounts to 'criminal conspiracy'. Caste is further strengthened on all fronts. This is infact contrary to the letter and spirit of our constitution. A new policy of scheduling and de-scheduling including a large number of variables and made applicable on household and individual basis, rather than entire caste groups is the need of the hour. We have the necessary infrastructure to indulge in this exercise, which would be supplemented if necessary.

Casteism, communalism and corruption, the three C's can be squarely attributed to the built-in faults of protective discrimination policy which is eating into the very vitals of our heritage if we have one. While we are proud of our so-called spiritual heritage, what is happening in the country is exactly the other way round. Who can say, and on what grounds that Indians are otherworldly, morally upright and God fearing? We are far more materialistic than the Westerners whom we describe as materialistic. The scams, the various frauds, favouritism, exploitation of poor people have continued unabatted.

It is not fair to blame the politicians alone for this state of affairs, although they play a major role, hence have a greater share. Indian intellectuals also are responsible since a vast majority of them have been playing second fiddle and otherwise are acting as power-brokers. There is corruption, favouritism, nepotism, casteism, communalism and all other attributes even in our educational institutions and teaching

community. Fall in standards and other ills that plague the educational system have to be shared equally by the teachers as well.

Given the determination and strong political will, matters can be set right. Indian freedom movement is a glowing example. Human beings are not only selfish, but they could be generous as well. If reservation on caste basis has been misused, and is not serving the purpose for which it was meant, what is the fun in extending it to cover nearly 80 percent of the population in the sub-continent under one or the other pretext? Is it not a divisive force? Are not different castes pitched against one another? When there is so much of clamouring for reservation, is there any attempt to evaluate the scheme as it is operating for nearly last 45 years? Are political reservations serving the purpose of throwing up leaders from among SCs, STs? A couple of individuals drawn from these groups have dominated the national political scene for too long effectively blocking the emergence of second line of political leaders.

Additions and more additions to existing reserved categories have turned the scheme nearly useless. Passing off phenomena is not checked, and people cheating the government are close to the seat of power. Instead of evolving de-scheduling mechanism, applicable to those who have sufficiently benefitted and reached a stage of development, the policy is out and out creating a nation of dependents who never want to grow up. Lack of work ethic, achievement oriented spirit, dignity and self-respect have become the casualties.

The present empirical study has generated some good points to ponder. Tribes should be allowed to thrive according to the ethos that have guided the people. They should not be forcibly brought over to the mainstream based on caste stratification with all the attendant problems. Similarly castes should not be allowed to pass off for Tribes. Since that amounts to robbing the latter. There is an urgent need to revamp the entire reservation policy, scrapping all populist measures to save the nation.

SECTION – B

NOTE ON METHODOLOGY

Simple random sampling and interview methods are adopted in this study. Schedules are used to collect information. In addition formal and informal discussions were held with informants. Secondary sources are consulted to supplement necessary information relevant for the study. This is a comparative study of the Kuruba caste and Kadu Kuruba Tribal group of Karnataka. While the Kuruba caste is found throughout the state, with concentration in some districts, Kadu Kurubas who constitute ST category, and a jungle tribe till recently, are found to inhabit mostly Mysore and Coorg districts.

The population of the Kurubas is not available in recent census reports, while Kadu Kuruba ST figures are available. The two Backward Classes Commissions, the first headed by L.G. Havanur in 1970s have given Kuruba population figures from different base years (see p.44) and telescoped for 1972. The second Commission headed by T. Venkataswamy in 1980s has also given the state Kuruba population. Accordingly the Kurubas with a population of 20,32,032 constituted 6.77% in the total population in 1972 and it was 6.92% in 1980s with a population of 25,01,465. The present study has taken a sample of 601 Kuruba households spread over 4 districts in the state. A matching sample of 601 households are covered for Kadu Kurubas. The Jenu Kuruba population in 1972 was 4,670 and constituted 0.01 percent to total state population and that of Kadu Kurubas was 5,135 in 1972 constituting 0.02 per cent of total state population. While for Coorg, the base year 1961 Kuruba ST population was 9246, and the projected figure for 1972 was 11,020.

According to K.S. Singh – The People of India – the Scheduled Tribes, Jenu Kuruba population was 6,656 in 1971 but it jumped to 34,747 by 1981. Similarly the Kadu Kuruba, Betta Kuruba population was 8,192 in 1971 but by 1981 it rose to 2,09,677. It is said that this sudden increase could be due to the inclusion of Kuruba community, which is not a Scheduled Tribe in Karnataka.

Tribal People of Heggada Devana Kote (H.D. Kote), another study carried out by Nanjunda Rao in 1988, states, that according to 1971 census, the tribal population of the taluk was 6,686, but by 1981, it increased to 20,332, a phenomenal annual increase of 30.4 per cent. It is said several other groups like 'Nayak' and 'Parivara' were added to ST list by 1981.

All the above sources give different figures, while K.S. Singh and Nanjunda Rao have also given reasons, for this increase in 1981. In the present study we decided to have same number of sample households for Kadu Kurubas on par with Kurubas.

For Kurubas the sample was drawn from 4 districts viz., Mysore, Dharwad, Bellary and Chitradurga. While Mysore and Chitradurga were part of former princely Mysore State, Dharwad was in Bombay presidency, Bellary in Madras presidency added to Mysore State in 1950s upon states reorganization on linguistic basis. Geographical, administrative and cultural variations are thus taken care of. Also interior places and places from trunk routes are included. Depending upon the households and availability of informants, the sample size was adjusted. Also the total sample drawn from each district is not given to large scale variation. A sample of 145 households for Mysore, 151 in Dharwad, 150 in Bellary and 155 in Chitradurga district – a total of 601 households, with a total population of 4,102 Kurubas, is adequate. In the absence of known source of data on the caste, the study has endeavoured to cover as many places and households to enable objective assessment (see the Chart p.45 and 46 and Maps).

Kadu Kurubas are concentrated in Mysore and Coorg districts. The present study has drawn its sample from two taluks in Mysore district. From Hunsur taluk 301 households are studied, while 150 each are selected from Antharasanthe and N.Begur areas of H.D. Kote taluk. In both taluks NGOs are working among the tribals. The sample covers a total population of 2,891 (see the Chart p.45-46 & Maps). The sample is adequate and enables drawing some valid conclusions.

Initially it was contemplated to limit the size of the sample to 400, but later on decided to increase it to 600 to make it more representatives. Interviewing the Kuruba political leaders and Kuruba Sangha Office-bearers was abandoned, because of the sensitive nature of the issues involved. The kind of extraneous pressures would have hampered the study. We tried to interview an M.P. who is now state level Congress President. In Dharwad it could not materialise, as he was always surrounded by people and did not favour being interviewed by research staff. Time contraint and frequenting the political leaders with or without success would not have altered the research outcome. The policy implications of the study are indicated both in the introduction as well as in conclusion. For getting desired results, 'Reservation' policy has to be time-bound with builtin de-scheduling provision.

SECTION – C

PLAN OF THE STUDY

The present study as indicated already in the title is a comparative study between caste and tribe having common nomenclature. The Kurubas in Karnataka constitute both a caste group as well as a tribal community. It could be also termed as a study in contrast. Hence the data wherever possible highlights more of differences rather than similarities. Relevant to these discussions is also the policy of reservations, which was evolved by Dr. Ambedkar and adopted in the constitution. While Kadu Kurubas come Under ST category, so are entitled for reservation benefits, the Kuruba caste group, as things stand do not qualify for reservation facilities. All the same Kurubas as a caste-group are striving to be classed as tribe and assert Uru and Kadu (village and forest) Kurubas are one and the same. This is just a ploy adopted by the politically vocal and powerful Kurubas, who as the facts reveal have nothing much in common with the Kadu Kurubas.

The introductory chapter deals with some broad as well as specific reasons that prompted to undertake this study. The social unrest that caused some ripples in the wake of the Mandal Commission Report and its implementation, the 'positive discrimination, policy acquired a new dimension. For hither too, reservation benefits as outlined in the constitution accrued only to SCs and STs. From here the Mandal Commission spread its wings far and wide to cover a major chunk of Indian population constituting the Sudra Varna the debates, discussions, workshops and conferences concentrated their attention in early 1980's on the above theme infact could not find a reasonable solution. Political will traditionally carried more weight than a mere intellectual exercise!

A note on methodology provides information about the selection of sample in both the groups under study. Simple random sample is supplemented by interviews, discussions and secondary data sources. The tribal group is concentrated in Mysore and Coorg districts, while

Kuruba caste group is widespread in the state. Accordingly samples for tribals are drawn from Mysore district, while for the latter, is spread out in 4 districts in the state.

In chapter II caste-tribe syndrome and Indian Social setting, a brief reference to historical factors involved in the evolution of Indian caste society are in place. As against this, the original tribal groups which remained isolated in forest and hilly areas untouched by various conquests by ruling classes, eventually were subdued and somewhat tamed by the Imperial British rulers. With the advent of freedom, many a tribal group is brought under the reservation umbrella for protection and improvement. Accordingly Kadu Kurubas with at least 3 sub-groups constitute Scheduled Tribe category. While Kuruba-caste is not entitled for ST category, ceaseless efforts are on to get tribal tag to the caste group by the leaders and vested interests.

Chapter III on tribe and caste is an attempt to identity as well as differentiate the two : the sophisticated theoreitical issues that were raised by F.G. Bailey in the wake of his studies in Orissa focussing on Kond tribals and Oriyas throws into relief some important points to ponder. In addition there are also common place general distinctions as has been held by many others while distinguishing caste and tribal societies. Given the stand that caste and tribe form a continnum, both drawn into political democracy and larger economic system, many twists and turns have occurred to strengthen caste system. Caste, Tribe differences get further mileage as empirical data is analyzed in the chapters that follow. Some amount of to and fro reference to emphasize the differences at the risk of repetition becomes inevitable.

Under Kurubas of Karnataka, in chapter IV reference is made to Backward Classes Commissions which have given population figures for Kuruba caste and Kadu Kurubas (ST) in Karnataka. Since census have no caste-wise information, one has to look for other possible alternative sources. The Kuruba Sangha gives an inflated figure of around 10% while it is said to be around 7% according to Venkataswamy Commission Report.

Details about places and size of the sample are also given. Data collected from the informants regarding land holding, occupation, including diversification of economic activities, education as well as other facilities – like hostels for students are analyzed. Information on caste status of Kurubas in the hierarchy and their interaction with both upper and lower castes, as considered by the respondents is analyzed. This highlights how caste feelings dominate other walks of-life. So that a vast majority want caste system to continue and to this end endorse caste endogamy. Forces of modernization are yet to make any noticeable changes.

Similar analysis is attempted in the chapter on Kadu Kurubas in Hadis. The tribal social organization has a number of clans. Clans have different totemic objects/animals which are considered sacred. Hence killing or eating them is taboo. Most of the land owned by the tribals is granted by the government. Although tribals have taken to agriculture, majority of them eke out a living as agricultural coolies. Food gathering is still in vogue whereby the tribals collect roots, berries and greens as part of minor forest produce and sustain themselves. There is almost no diversification of economic activities.

In the light of the appalling economic conditions, formal education is minimal. Government has provided some Ashram schools and Nursery schools. Primary, Middle and High schools provide schooling but students have to cover quite a distance to reach the schools. Only negligible number enter college and they have yet to open the account in professional and technical courses, while others have successfully passed off for tribals and availed seats in professional and technical colleges.

On the whole there is no comparison between the Kurubas and Kadu Kurubas. While Kurubas are in a comfortable position, the tribals will take ages to reach that position, that too if facilities under ST category continue unabated, without getting diluted or possible hindrance from caste-groups trying so snatch ST tag for themselves which would be only at the cost of genuine tribal people.

Marriage and family among the Kurubas and Kadu Kurubas throws up some important points to differentiate the caste from tribe. There are a few similarities also. Caste endogamy and Bedagu exogamy has its counterpart in tribal endogamy and clan exogamy. But for this there are striking differences. Arranged marriages are almost the rule among the Kuruba caste-group and the spouses themselves have very little to choose. Kinsmen on both sides : The bride-groom families are involved. Also a marriage involves a number of rituals and members of different castes playing ritual roles are very much in evidence.

'Marriage by elopement' is still preferred and popular with the Kadu Kurubas. The girl and boy of marriageable age pair themselves and disappear into forest. They fend for themselves a few days and return to the Hadi. The parents of the boy and girl along with tribal elders solemnize the marriage. No elaborate rituals and kinsmen are involved. The marriage partners enjoy and exercise individual freedom in selecting the spouse.

Immediately after marriage, among Kadu Kurubas, the couple sets up their own house and live independently. Nuclear family is universal. In contrast among the Kurubas the bride joins her husband and his parents or other relatives. Joint family, sometimes with degrees of jointness is common. A nuclear family will emerge at a much later time under the impact of modern education and employment.

The position and status of Kadu Kuruba woman is better, in that she enjoys more freedom and there is no utter subordinates to men. While this is not the case with Kuruba woman. Both Kurubas and Kadu Kurubas are patrilineal. But divorce, separation, remarriage, carry no stigma among tribals. While it is an uphill task, and the woman is at a disadvantage among Kurubas.

In chapter VII Politico-Religious Organization among the Kurubas and Kadu Kurubas are analyzed. In fact politics and religion are geared up to such an extent, it becomes difficult to pinpoint where religion begins and politics ends and vice-versa.

A brief mention of Karl Marx, Max Weber, Gandhi and Ambedkar and the ideological implication are presented. Marx discords religion as an 'Opiate' to masses. According the Max Weber, religion, especially protestant sects in the west were crucial in playing a positive role in the emergence of modern capitalism.

In Gandhiji's thought and writings we get a blending of religion and politics. He asserts, he was a Sanatan Hindu, and fighting for India's freedom need not be hindered by his religious beliefs and practices. Diametrically opposed to this was Ambekdar's views on Hinduism and the practice of untouchability. Ambedkar's opposition to Hinduism did not make him irreligious. On the contrary he started searching for alternative forms based on 'rationalism and compassion' and ended up in bringing back Buddhism, advocating that untouchables should embrace Buddhism which was the religion of their ancestors once upon a time. He also 'fathered' 'reservation policy', as Chairman of the constitution drafting committee as a means to uplift and secure social justice to untouchable sections and tribals.

It is these categories who were included in the schedule, so that Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (SCs and STs) came to signify people coming under 'protective discrimination'. It is these benefits which have caused and are causing heartburn to many non-scheduled groups and are thus proving a hindrance to general development.

Kurubas who are aspiring for ST status, infact have rather sound economic background, educationally also doing well. We get an impressive list of political leaders in different political parties. Right from the first general election in 1952 to date, there are a number of MLAs, MLCs, Ministers, MPs. The Kuruba Sangha was established in Bangalore quite early to organize and monitor the progress of the Kurubas.

In recent years around 1992 they founded a Mutt located at Kaginele near Haveri in Dharwad district (Now Haveri is itself a district). A Jagadguru who hails from Mysore district is now heading the Mutt. Also a number of educational institutions are being run in

different districts. Thus divisive political aspirations can be suppressed and brought under one religious authority. A sustained effort is now underway to unify, educate and prepare the Kurubas all over Karnataka to exert pressure on the forces that be, so that the caste group derives the benefits of ST tag.

The Kadu Kurubas living as they do on the fringe of forests, until recently mostly in isolation are neither a political nor a religious force. In fact their religious beliefs and practices pertain to tribal religion with a mix of Hindu pantheism, as they are coming in close contact with neighbouring villagers and others. No Jagadguru conscience will dawn on them in near future.

Politically, till recently, they were involved only in casting their votes in general elections. Now with Panchayat Institutions and formal representation based on reservation, a few of them have become members. Given this scenario, Kadu Kurubas cannot compete with Kurubas in any arena. If as the Kuruba informants wish, the formation of Kuruba Maha Sangha at National Level including Kadu Kurubas, it is only a number game. Beyond theoretical merger for the benefits that accrue to Kurubas, Kadu Kurubas will be left behind high and dry.

The reservation policy as such is but a positive devise provided in the constitution to ameliorate the deplorable conditions in which certain categories/groups of Indian people were living for centuries. The Scheduled castes-former untouchables-and the Scheduled tribes are provided constitutional benefits in economic, political, educational and social spheres. Certain percentage of seats are reserved to provide political representation in State Assembly and Parliament. Economic incentive are also given to promote education and jobs in government departments. Housing, economic incentives to promote skills and many more schemes are said to be operating. This is a scheme which came in the wake of adoption of the constitution in 1950's.

But much earlier, some kind of reservation of preferential treatment was accorded to non-scheduled castes or backward classes

rather a loose organization without fixed boundaries which provided facilities for inter-varna movement of people.

A scholar, a ruler, a tradesman cum agriculturist as well as the persons from SUDRA group purported to be serving the above three, it can be assumed did not form an hierarchy nor constituted superior subordinate groups. This state of affairs could not have survived for long. For it is human nature to capitalize on differences rather than emphasize common features. In REGVEDA itself, there is already reference to emerging caste structure and fifth varna, the **PANCHAMA** – the forerunners of untouchables, or the contemporary scheduled castes (SCs) as contained in the constitution at the time it was adopted. Various groups have been included from time to time, because it is paying them with many constitutional benefits, specially, economic, education, jobs, and other political reservations that follows. Scheduled castes is now changed in colour and content. Groups wielding political clout can always be favoured with the SC tag. Similar process is at work in the case of Scheduled Tribes (ST). Both these categories are misused and abused by vested interests. More light will be shed with details later on.

The consolidation of castes with all the paraphernalia, rigid rules, and hierarchy is a post Upanishadic event. With the revival of Hinduism under the rule of **GUPTA DYNASTY,** and various law givers systematizing the rules of interaction and interpersonal behaviour, especially, so in the writings of Manu, 'Caste' came to occupy a pivotal position in Hindu society, guna and karma (quality and action) were replaced by birth. Birth into the caste became the hallmark and nothing else matters. There was no way of changing ones caste status except by renouncing wordly life and becoming a **SANNAYASIN.** But this option could not be availed by all categories/ groups of people. In spite of rigidities, now many empirical studies have substantiated that mobility – especially group mobility within the caste system has been there (M.N. Srinivas : 1977)[1]. This provided a latitude to aspiring groups to occasionally acquire a higher status in the social structure by fulfilling certain pre-requisites.

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1. M.N. Srinivas, Social Chage in Modern India, New Delhi Orient Longman Limited, 1977. p.7.

The apparently rigid caste system continued during medieval times despite Muslim invasion and Islamic rule in the country. Islam as an alternative to Hinduism, became a religious force. It gave respite to many lower castes, as they embraced Islamic faith both by force of rulers and by choice. Yet Islam also failed to eradicate the evils of caste system. People who converted from Hindu castes to Islam naturally carried with them values, customs, traditions which they had practiced and cherished for generations. Hindus responded with certain internal organizational changes to challenges posed by Islam. 'Purdah' and 'Sati' probably came into vogue during the period to save the 'honour' of Hindu women and caste status. It was a pertinent proposition for the upper castes to adopt newer practices.

Likewise, in post-Islamic period, with the advent of Christianity and British rule, caste structure did not undergo major transformation. Hence again low caste people embraced Christianity to escape from the stigma and degradation associated with caste in Hinduism. A vast majority are Catholics and Catholicism has never been revolutionary. It has accepted and adopted many features from Hinduism. Conversion to religions which profess brotherhood of mankind unfortunately failed to usherin the new spirit. On the contrary old values continued to plague the converts. pre-conversion caste status continued to dominate, so that today the demand for SC tag by Dalit Christians provides a live evidence.

Side by side we have a number of indigenous movements attempting social reforms for eradicating the evils of caste system. Starting with the earliest attempt in Buddhism, Jainism, Arya Samaj, Brahmo Samaj, Kabir panth, Sikhism, all effectively of North Indian origin and Veerashaivism of 12th century in Karnataka could not deliver the desired results. The initial euphoria generated by these movements appeared promising. But in reality it boiled down to adding further problems to the existing social system. They have all contributed to the proliferation of castes and sub-castes. Consequently one would be compelled to think at times that had these movements not taken place, we would have had considerably lesser number of castes and

sub-castes in the country today. The glowing example of this is the Veerashaiva movement of Karnataka. Today there are so many occupational groups among Veerashaivas, they all constitute separate castes and sub-castes similar to Brahmanical Hinduism. Over and above there is the priestly caste, despite Jagadgurus and Mutts, the castes and sub-castes even among the Jangamas are marked by the practice of interactional rules of behaviour as well as by traditional attributes of status.

Islam, Christianity, a host of indigenous attempts, culminated in making the Indian social system more complex and complicated. The additional increments did not mean reduction in rigidity. On the contrary the plight of the lower castes, effectively below the Sudra varna, viz., the untouchable groups, as well as the tribal groups continued to be discriminated, hence the worst affected. Throughout the known historical times, untouchables were the most marginalized groups subjected to all kinds of exploitation, deprivation and humiliating treatment at the hands of upper castes. Thus traditional attributes demarcating the upper and the lower castes was applicable in its entirety. Social and spatial distance was enforced. Economic dependence, political subordination of lower castes were proverbial. The conditions of secluded life, including ban on education and access to knowledge only added to their misery. Application of religious rules compelled them to remain within the Hindu-fold, though 'lesser Hindus'.

The gap or relaxation between attributional aspects and actual interactional relationships, it can be assumed as a pertinent factor that provided chances for the aspiring groups to attempt to be socially mobile. The process of sanskritization as an avenue for social mobility, conceived first by Srinivas later on supported by some field studies should necessarily combine both attributional and interactional processes involving a number of positive and negative values. In this the aspiring groups invariably came from 'clean' or middle range castes effectively above the 'pollution-barrier'. Those caste groups which are below the pollution-barrier, the traditionally classified untouchables

seldom succeed in achieving mobility vis-à-vis upper caste. Though sanskritization did provide an avenue, traditional attributes of low ritual status did not change in their favour. Efforts to question the attributes and put them into practice in interactions with others often lead to conflict, clashes, social boycott and never did it succeed in reducing/ removing the barriers.

The tribals on the contrary remained effectively outside the Hindu fold. Although they were identified as backward, as 'criminal tribes', later christened as ex-criminal, notified and denotified, they did not suffer from the stigma of untouchability. Hence their ritual status vis-à-vis other Hindus did not suffer the same kind and amount of degradation. Living outside the purview of caste attributes, provided an edge to them and their interaction with others was also minimal. Unlike lower castes in Hinduism, there was no need for tribal people to attempt social mobility through sanskritization. Yet quite a sizeable number of tribal people have indeed embraced Christianity in the North East, Bihar, Chotanagpur area and elsewhere in the country due to the activities of the Christian missionaries. This, however, did not lead to conflict with castes in the neighbourhood or at other places. At best it created cleavages within the tribal groups in the area. The Christian groups got opportunity for education and other facilities while the non-Christian sections remained stuck to their traditional mode of life.

With the advent of freedom, and India becoming a sovereign, secular, democratic republic certain measures were incorporated in the constitution to provide necessary facilities to promote equality, justice and so forth. To this end Ambedkar as Chairman of the constitution drafting committee advocated certain 'protective discrimination' measures in favour of the deprived groups. This included the various untouchable castes under the category of scheduled castes, and tribal groups as scheduled tribes. Before the reservation policy was evolved, the issues were discussed, debated in the constituent assembly. It was incorporated in the constitution regarding certain percentage of SCs and STs having political

in the wake of the non-Brahmin movement in former Madras Presidency (part Tamilnadu) also Princely Mysore State and Bombay Presidency. The scheme is operating in South India for the Sudra caste groups at least for over 50 years. But no one knows the outcome.

Mandal Commission Report in the 1970-80 in a way recommended the extension of the reservation facilities for BCs in the country. This created a sensation especially in North India. But the Appex Court ruling that the total reservation including SCs, STs, BC, OBC and SEBC should not cross 50% mark in a way is actual stumbling block to aspring Sudra caste groups. A total of 27% reservation benefits to these groups amounts to sprinkling of benefits which by their very nature are cornered by the well-to-do powerful groups among them. Hence many aspiring groups are trying to cross-over the fence and jump into SC/ST category so that they can knock off more benefits for themselves.

Kurubas do not want backward class status. They want to be included in the ST category, precisely this is more paying to them. Since Kadu Kurubas could hardly comprehend the moves of Kurubas (thanks to the role of NGO's creating awareness among tribals) the latter hopes that by organizing and pressurising they can bend the government and subvert the policy.

What follows in the conclusion and recommendations is a reflection on the sorry state of affairs that characterise the way protective discrimination policy is operating in the country. It has become more a divisive force than an ameliorative measure. People are dividing on minute differences in the name of caste, sub-caste, community, religion, languages, region and what not.

Though census have stopped recording castes, but the nation certainly can boast of more castes to-day than ever before. Reservation has become a bane to the country, the way it is operating, and based on caste criteria.

Taking corrective steps and streamlining the administration is tied with political will. Time-bound programmes with de-scheduling provisions is a necessary step. Let many more variables in addition

to caste be included while scheduling. But evolve a criteria to differentiate, deserving, more deserving, most deserving and least deserving groups and let the scheme operate. Populistic policies will create more problems than it solves. The need for rethinking and revamping reservation policy is most appropriate at this juncture.

A Pie in the sky – Reservations generating a Criss-Cross of Kuruba caste and tribe in Karnataka.

A Pie in the sky according to Oxford dictionary implies an unrealistic prospect of future happiness after present suffering, also means misleading promise.

The above title is a variation of the original caption "A Criss-Cross of Caste and Tribe – The Kurubas of Karnataka". It was suggested by Prof. Roy Burman who evaluated the report submitted to ICSSR that I change the title since there are two foci – Reservations and Caste-Tribe Criss-Cross. I casually stumbled upon the phrase Pie in the sky while looking for something else in the dictionary.

In both the senses the title of the book sounds appropriate. While the first meaning is more applicable to the Kuruba-caste aspirations for reservations under ST category. Though their suffering at best is imaginary. What is more distressing is that it is the educated section which is clamouring for ST tag while illiterates and literates want the government to help them by providing various economic benefits.

The second meaning, a misleading promise is more appropriate to the Kuruba-Tribal category. Scores of instances can be quoted where the tribals have been mislead by government authorities. Bulk of promises remain unfulfilled, be it granting land, rehabilitation of the displaced tribals from forest or even with regard to prohibition in tribal areas. The meagre benefits that reach the tribals are infact due to the initiative taken by some NGOs working among tribals. In either case it is bound to be a chimera for bulk of the most deserving people.

CHAPTER II

CASTE-TRIBE SYNDROME AND INDIAN SOCIAL SETTING

The present study is concerned with the interactions and inter-relationships between Caste and Tribe. Therefore it is necessary to dwell in detail on the phenomena in space and time scale. In pre-historic times perhaps the entire sub-continent consisted largely tribal groups settled in different parts of the country. But with the dawn of historical times, various invasions by outsiders, who eventually colonized and started to live a settled life, many of the original tribal groups either spread out in adjacent areas beyond the reach of colonizers or slowly got merged, though initially they were treated as slaves-serfs.

Inspite of the persistence of oral traditions, India has been a literate society, which also contained a reasonably sizeable pre-literate groups. It is these pre-literate groups which over the centuries have come to constitute tribes. Generally tribal people have tended to live away from the so-called civilized world. They have lived and continue to live in or nearby forest areas, hilly regions and have distinct social structure, economic activities, political organisation, religious beliefs, practices, customs, traditions including a judicial process.

These features help to demarcate the tribe from caste although over the centuries, some tribal groups have taken on the mantle of caste. It is true that the literary traditions in early Indian (Hindu) society were virtually the monopoly of a tiny section of people. This group decided who should get what kind and quantum of education, while secrecy shrouded the oral traditions. A majority of Indian Hindus did not have access to education and therefore knowledge. Hoarding of knowledge was thus a well established practice and closely guarded secret. Yet the majority which was denied access to knowledge under physical and moral threat strictly do not fall under pre-literate society definition. For they constituted part and parcel of the literate society, as all the rules and regulations, code of conduct, judicial processes

were applicable to them. Unlike tribal people, caste groups abided by written and unwritten code of conduct interpreted and applied by the top segment of the society, the rest of the Indian Hindu society abided by these dictates. Gradually rigidity set in culminating in hierarchical relationships of superordination and subordination. The tribal society on the contrary not only remained outside the purview of the rigid rules and regulations but it was marked in most cases by egalitarian values and thus was/is characterized by a rather distinct set of institutions and practices different from caste system. In the course of centuries of existence side-by-side some kind of mix of caste and tribe are visible. In this, it is the tribes which are at the receiving end and in some cases tribes have assumed and assimilated caste characteristics rather than the otherway round. More details on this processes will follow.

At this juncture in Indian history, Hindu society seems to be at cross-roads and also working at cross-purpose, sometimes emphasizing distinct and discreet characteristics, at other times trying to subsume different identities as one's own and merging and getting merged with other groups at a later period. Historically Indian society, specially its social/ethnic groupings have passed through different phases in its course of development. It is not one straight line, but a zig-zag course, where the fortunes of at least some social groups depended on the role if not whims and fancies of the rulers.

It is not my propose here to go into details of social evolution of Hindu society. Just an attempt is made to recapitulate the important phases. During the VEDIC period, it is said, there was no rigid categorization of social groups on caste-basis. The divisions in society were not water-tight compartments. A degree of flexibility marked the **VARNA** division. The four varnas, Brahman, Kshatriya, Vysya and Sudra constitute occupational categories charged as much by appropriate quality or GUNA pertaining to specific category. It is also said that people of particular varna diplaying qualities pertinent to another varna could easily cross-over to that varna. Thus it was

are in absolute need of protection and assistance. Unless this is done, merely scheduling groups on the basis of caste is an anathema and anti-thesis of pious declaration of promoting casteless society in the country. Anything but castes have multiplied and become more vocal and rigid in the last fifty years. This can be attributed in a good measure as due to reservation policy.

Reservation policy can be retained in principle. But it has to be more broad based, include a lot more variables. There should be time schedule and not enternity in its operation. Further, with scheduling, the right to de-schedule based on objective evaluation should be incorporated. While demand for reservation facilities is rampant, no beneficiary has aired satisfactory progress, hence descheduling. It is part of human nature to seek and continue to enjoy benefits for themselves. Seldom they think of the lot of the poor, deprived and more deserving groups without food, proper clothes and shelter.

The present exercise through this study is an attempt to focus attention on the lopsided development, increase in human misery, poverty and so on. A little adroitness on the part of the government, precisely in democratic setup can introduce corrective steps to steer the nation in right direction. If small countries like Malaysia and big countries like China have made strides, why not India?

CHAPTER–III

TRIBE AND CASTE

The question of differentiating people as tribals and caste groups in Indian society has been attracting the attention of administrators and politicians besides social scientists during the last five decades. The "protective discrimination" policy has further escalated the problem in the recent past.

In many parts of India, tribal people have come into contact with caste people and are being absorbed into caste society. The Coorgs of South India is a case in point (Srinivas:1953)[1]. In contrast some caste groups are claiming tribal identity especially after 1980s.

A debate on caste – tribe distinction was initiated by Bailey (1961)[2]. Commenting on 'Tribe – caste trend' he posed four questions before evaluating the process of social change in Indian society:

"Is this a good thing? Ought it to be stopped? Should the tribal people be assisted to make the move? Should the process be controlled to prevent suffering? Or, alternatively, should social forces be allowed to work themselves out, without any kind of interference by the state?"

Secondly, "How, infact, are tribal people absorbed into a caste society? What institution, of kinship, politics, economics, or religion, are involved in the change? Why does it take place at all?"

The third question is "By what criteria do we decide whether a particular people are to be considered caste people or tribal people".

And finally, "What is at a theoretical level, the difference between a tribal society and a caste society?".

The main drawback of different studies focussing on the differences between "Tribe" and "Caste" has been the lack of sociological precision while formulating questions. Instead of taking sociological studies of a particular tribe in concomitance with a given Hindu environment, we tend to pick up those criteria – geographical,

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1. M.N. Srinivas; Religion and Society the Among Coorgs of South India, Oxpord, 1952.
2. F G Bailey, Tribe and Caste in India, in Contribution to Indian Sociology, No. V Oct. 1961, pp 7-19.

cultural, economic etc., which are obvious and if they are valid would provide a thumb rule for distinguishing caste from tribe.

Further, as is done often, we should not begin with the presumption that a tribal society differs from the Hindu society in every respect. No comprehensive list of differences between caste and tribe can be prepared. That the postulates of a tribal society are entirely different from a Hindu caste society is misleading since there obtains a good deal of overlap such as for instance, language, geographical environment etc., Thus, instead of focussing on totality of behavior, enquiry should be tapered down to particular fields of behaviour.

hese approaches, on the other hand are circular in their argument. Not only they resort to pre-research classification and characterise some as tribes and some others as castes, but they also try to extend definite answers on the basis of this. Thus they manage to by-pass the all important sociological question. What distinctions are to be made between tribal social organization and caste social organization? In short, the 'observed' differences (geographical, cultural etc.) remains unproved.

Questions like the ethical nature of social change in the tribal society, their absorption into the caste system any by what criteria can some people be called tribal? The theoretical question what is the difference between or not can be answered only when we succeed in answering a tribal society and a caste society?

The theoretical answers, in abstract model need not however be exemplified in a particular tribal society in a perfect manner. Instead of perceiving the tribal and caste societies as poles apart or as dichotomous, we should visualise them as a continuum. Distinctive questions like: Is this a tribe or caste? Needs to be replaced by -- to what extent a particular society is close to the segmentary tribal model or conversely, to the organic caste model? We have to consider caste and tribe as structures or as institutional complexes which are there as CHOICES for the individuals in particular societies. Consequently, we see change taking place wherein, for one model is opted at the expense of another and then we can ask who are the people making this choice and why they do so? Finally, even the question of morality,

surprisingly ceases, as the caste studies illustrates: That both caste and tribe are getting merged into a different political and economic democracy and capitalistic-system wherein exclusive exemplification and delineated categorisation no longer holds good.

Yet it is still important to retain the Tribe-caste differences by applying other criteria, as will become clear in this study. Though we go along with Bailey for some distance, we can stop to look back how political democracy has failed to usher in freedom, equality and justice to all. Some are more equal than others. Market economy has lead to more exploitation and disparity so much so the traditionally poor, backward, downtrodden sections -- a large chunk of SCs and STs are still at the bottom rungs while the middle range caste groups are laying claim to constitutional status and privileges of SCs and STs. This problem needs to be addressed empirically on local and regional basis.

An attempt is made in this chapter to differentiate between tribe and caste. While caste system is unique to India, caste-like structures can be found in other societies including class based one. However, what makes the caste system unique and pertaining to India are certain features. For instance birth is one of the determinants. Caste status is based on birth and one cannot acquire it. Caste system is seemingly rigid and boundaries are drawn much before one's birth and they are fixed.

All social interactions between different caste groups, including economic activities, education till recently, political participation and juridical rights were hinging on caste status. With industrialization, occupational diversity has set in, so that now traditional occupation based on caste is withering. Yet when it comes to low status "polluting" occupations like scavenging, sweeping public roads, leather work, butchery and so on, caste and occupational attribute is still very pertinent. There is very little evidence of mixed living of different castes unless they enjoy equal status particularly in villages. While eponymous residential pattern with scheduled castes living a little away from main village is still commonly found in Indian villages, in towns and cities, it is not so marked, though it may be in practice and remain sly.

representation in state assemblies and parliament, so that emergence of formal leadership would take place, then reservation in educational institutions and jobs and other measures that would help upliftment.

Reservation policy has generated both positive and negative reactions. On the positive side some dents are made in the traditional structure, and those SCs individuals and families that have successfully availed the constitutional benefits have become somewhat mobile, in that the well educated SC boys holding remunerative jobs have contracted inter-caste marriages mainly with upper-caste girls. Whether this in itself will lead to structural changes is difficult to predict at this juncture. How their sons and daughters will fare in years to come is also perhaps tied with education and spatial mobility in addition to economic improvement of at least a middle class status. This does not however, imply that all scheduled castes have been evenly benefitted by reservation policy. This has created considerable inequality and imbalance among scheduled caste ranks itself.

The preferential policy to SCs and STs has indeed created heartburn among all poorer sections of Hindu population and more so from caste groups drawn from sudra varna. The tendency over the years has been to quietly pass off by obtaining requisite caste/tribe certificate to get into professional courses of study specially at higher levels. Also obtain jobs on this basis and enjoy scholarships, free studentships in addition to deriving other economic benefits. This is one of the negative reactions to reservation facilities. Though in recent years scheduled caste 'managers' who are running educational institutions have also evolved a money spinning mechanism of issuing SC certificate to non-SC students enrolling in the institutions, then black mailing them to collect more money on the pretext to protect the student's SC tag intact on records, thus shielding them against the possible identification and action by Welfare Department.

While population-wise SCs are numerous, and STs are much less in most of the states except North-East, Bihar, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh. SCs are better organized and they have now taken to agitation as a method of inviting attention to problems and their solutions. The

STs are a long way behind, except in some parts where NGOs are creating awareness, the exploitative forces are continuously operating in tribal areas. In addition many others, effectively drawn from sudra groups have nearly succeeded in getting tribal concessions in their favour. Many are attempting to get tribal tags while some have been enjoying the benefits. In Mysore district, the Parivaras, have invariably got into medical and engineering colleges on tribal quota. The genuine tribals are no-where in picture.

Based on Mandal Commission, reservation facilities are now applicable to many more caste-groups. The Backward Classes (BCs) and other Backward Classes (OBCs) and those belonging to Socially, Educationally Backward Classes (SEBCs) are not satisfied. A total of 27 per cent besides SCs and STs, have to be distributed among a number of groups. The recourse that some of these groups are now having is to obtain SC or ST tag by any means and this cuts into latters quota initially until the entiregroups are deprived in due course. Every other day caste groups are organizing and agitating. In this politicians also act as willing partners. Right now in Karnataka several such attempts have surfaced.

Parivara caste-group, clean sudra varna category are pressurising the government to legalize them as STs, while they are 'illegally' enjoying tribal benefits in many areas. A concerted effort is afoot by the Kurubas (shepards) of Karnataka to subsume the tribal group of Kadu Kurubas (Jungle Tribe) which consists of sub-groups like, Jenu-Kurubas, Betta Kurubas and Mullu kurubas (in Tamil Nadu and elsewhere). The Kurubas have a state level organization to pressurise the government, there are a good number of political leaders, M.L.As, M.Ps, Ministers at different levels. Economically and educationally, they can be said to have advanced while Kadu Kurubas will take ages to reach these levels. In recent years, they have even installed a Jagadguru. So religious organization and overtones are evident. At some point of time, with all the clout that the shepard caste (kurubas) have acquired, by a stroke of political will, the tribal groups merely on the basis of common nomenclature,

are included in the main group, that should sound the death-knell of the tribal groups. The Kadu Kurubas can never hope to even survive in this competition.

The deviations that have come about because of the constitutional guarantees to certain sections of Indian people are not wrong or immoral by themselves. But the willing bending of the reservation facilities to all and sundry groups by providing SC, ST tags is illegal. There can be no social justice and fairplay even in future, just as it happened traditionally. Caste is becoming strong day by day and building a castless democratic secular republic remains a far away dream. The political clout which caste groups have acquired and are acquiring makes it the most ubiquitous institution which can control and direct the future of the nation.

The above details are pertinent to understand the ongoing subtle as well as bold attempts by different Hindu caste-groups to clinch the SC or ST tag so that they will be entitled for all the benefits constitutionally meant for the specific categories identified earlier. There is no reason or rhyme, much less any rationale behind these claims. There are millions of deserving SCs and STs who are yet to know the availability of measures of 'protective discrimination' and they continue to lead a miserable life. Those who have benefited by the measures and improved their living standards constitute a tip of the ice-berg. They are also greedy to grab and keep all benefits for themselves. Caught in this vicious circle the conditions of the millions of vulnerable SCs and STs is indeed pitiable. There does not seem to be a way out, since government itself is a party accommodating the newer and pressurising groups which could not constitute SCs or STs. The political clout acquired by the new groups and politics of vote banks in democracy are combined to militate against the deserving people.

The government legislation regarding protected forest areas have nearly uprooted many tribal groups who combine food production with food gathering economy. While tribals gradually converging with

castes is a familiar phenomena in the history of the sub-continent, the reverse process, whereby well settled village caste groups are laying claim to tribal status and are getting it too is a recent trend. Thus the zeroing-in process has setin for tribes unless the tribal groups are numerous and powerful or they are backed by vocal NGOs and other social workers, their fate seems to be sealed and future is very bleak.

The above observations will be borne out by facts from the field. What follows in the coming chapters is as much a comparative study of Uru (village) Kurubas and Kadu (Forest) Kurubas, the former displaying a well organized caste structure with all the attributional and interactional features with attendant status, while the latter exhibit Tribal characteristics in no uncertain terms. Thus the values, customs, traditions and social institutions nursed by the two groups are naturally divergent. All this and many important aspects of caste-tribe criss-crossing should throw into relief how people will jump readily when it is beneficial to them. To test the truth of this if tomorrow the government withdraws all the preferential provisions meant for STs, here kadu kurubas, will the Uru Kurubas still canvass for inclusion of kadu kurubas and merge with them?

It is doubtful if this process will help the tribals in any meaningful way. On the contrary, it will lead to more deprivation and dis-service to the tribes. A more rational approach is necessary to differentiate the tribes and their problems from the village/town based Kurubas who have acquired enough clout to make themselves felt at different levels specially in the political arena which at this juncture in Indian history seem to be the agent/custodian of the rights to consider and grant SC, ST, OBC, BT, BC tags to groups that demand.

Objective analysis of the data should shed enough light as to how and where policies and their implementation is going wrong. Since this involves the future of many groups both castes and tribes, it would be necessary on the part of the government to evolve measures of de-scheduling based on a comprehensive review of how reservation policy has been operating, who are the beneficiaries and which groups

Many inroads are made into vegetarian, non-vegetarian food distinction and consumption of liquor. Yet accepting food and sharing drinks amongst caste groups does indicate caste status. A hierarchy runs across so that castes exhibit a vertical hierarchy, superior castes – the twice born, rank the highest, the scheduled castes (Ex-untouchables) the lowest. Between these two points there are a large number of middle range caste-groups. Generally the lower castes tend to accept cooked food and water from the hands of upper castes, while the reverse seldom happens. So the traditional attributes are still valid in inter-caste interactional situation in villages. The vertical hierarchy in the villages takes the form of horizontal spread when it cross the village boundaries and spread to cover other villages.

The rules of marriage, since majority of them are arranged ones, never cross the boundaries of the caste. Also religious participation and other aspects of social living are marked by the invisible line of demarcation that divides people belonging to different castes, though traditionally ritual and economic interdependence have been marked and enabled the system to thrive. In recent years, these superordination-subordination relationships are changing largely on account of the protests made by lower castes, since Indian constitution has given them a base. But often this is marked by risks, riots, caste/ communal clashes and conflict.

Democracy has added a new dimension to the caste. Reservation facilities have further strengthened it. Things now look that caste groups have taken a firm root and there is no going back on the system. Castless society is a far cry and castes will stay and no power on earth and the wishful thinking for its eradication will produce substantial structural changes. Though some dents are made but no large-scale changes are likely to take place in the near future. Because there is an inherent contradiction between constitutional aspirations for building a casteless society and providing reservation facilities of upliftment on caste basis, the latter has become an over-riding factor and as of now many new groups have entered the schedule and more are waiting in the wings for right time to strike.

In contrast to consolidation of caste-groups, tribal situation in India is more flex and boundaries are becoming more lax. The simple distinction which I have made earlier characterizing the tribal society as 'pre-literate' and caste society as 'literate' need to be taken with some precaution if not totally discarded. For even in caste society, it was a tiny minority which cultivated and nursed the literary traditions, banning a vast majority from having access to literacy and knowledge. However, the vast majority was bound by code of conduct and other social regulations evolved and applied to all by the literate. To this extent Indian caste society can boast of literary traditions from hoary past. Tribes also have now acquired and learning is promoted through formal and informal education processes. To begin with the Christian missionaries who made inroads into tribal territory especially in the North-East, Chotanagapur and elsewhere initiated their work through education and health services followed by conversion to Christianity. With the advent of imperial administration, missionary activities were hastened and strengthened. If Nagaland can declare 'English' as the official language of the state, one could now gauge the situation with much 'ease'.

Bailey does discuss the issue at some length. He does not readily accept the conventional explanation often tendered to distinguish between a tribe and caste. He does not agree that language, religion, backwardness, living in hilly region and forest fringe would lend more credence. Even claiming an autochthonous status need not be taken as proof. In fact he postulates tribe-caste as a continuum as follows: At one end is a society whose political system is entirely of the segmentary egalitarian type, and which contains no dependents whatsoever; and at the other end of which is a society in which segmentary political relations exist only between a very small proportion of total society, and most people act in the system in the role of dependents[1].

Since Bailey attempts to apply this to the konds, the tribals and Oriyas as represented by different castes, it sounds a reasonable distinction. But for the present study, another definition given by the

1. F.G. Bailey, Tribe, Caste and Nation, Manchester, Manchester university Press, 1960, p. 264.

same author seems to be more apt and hence applicable to demarcate the kadu kurubas with sub-divisions as tribe, while Uru Kurubas constitute a caste-group. Bailey further says, "The methods of establishing whether a particular group is a tribe or a caste are the same. If they have direct command over resources, and their access to the products of the economy are not derived mediately through a dependent status on others, then they are to be counted as a Tribe"[1].

The above description of a tribe though still convincing, have become partly redundant due to various forest legislations enacted by government, which have lead to uprooting of tribals from their original habitat and economy. With such groups of people as forest officials and others, tribals are dragged into larger economic system as labourers. In spite of all this they have still clung to and exhibit in some measures command over resources and access to the products of the economy, despite forest regulations. In this sense, in many other ways I would describe the kadu kurubas as tribal group.

At best tribes and castes can represent a continuum and do not become interchangeable. The preponderance of castegroups living in the neighbourhood of tribes, continuous interaction of one or the other kind., over a period of time, provided the tribal group is sufficiently numerically strong can imbibe caste features and constitute a caste like group. Also it is not too low a status that is accorded to them by other castes staying in the neighbourhood. The kodavas (Coorgis) and Ursus (former rulers) of Karnataka are cases in point. These are the descendants of mixed unions but both claim Kshatriya status. A process of miscegenation rather than conquest or sanskritization seem to be plausible explanation.

Once a tribal group takes on the form of caste, it is very difficult to get back to original position, except under prevailing conditions of constitutional privileges which is directly responsible for prompting and pepping up groups to search for their 'roots of origin' even as they have achieved a new status, say through religious conversion, the case with Christians who now clamour for 'Dalit' status, implying

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1. Ibid., p. 265.

that they converted from former untouchable castes, hence constitutional privileges should be extended to them on the status-quo-ante basis on par with scheduled castes.

The framers of the constitution and the debates in the Constituent Assembly had evolved certain specific principles to include groups of people in the schedule. Now all this is overtaken by political expediency, and governments have gone on including all and sundry groups in the schedule. Including scheduled caste converts to sikhism was hotly debated in the constituent assembly, to-day, we know the neo-Buddhists, SC (mostly Mahars) have secured the rights. In Karnataka groups like Oddas and Lambanis, who constituted 'Criminal tribes' during British rule now enjoy SC status mostly due to the largesse shown by political leaders. Similarly the Parivaras are trying to get the official tag of STs, though unofficially they are enjoying the privileges. Now the Uru Kurubas claim that Kadu Kurubas, with all sub-divisions are not different but one with them. If this is conceded by the 'President of India' on the recommendations of the State Assembly and Pariament, Kadu Kurubas will be permanently pushed to darker alleys and can never hope to reap constitutional facilities to improve their lot.

The general trend of passing off for SCs and STs by non-SCs and non-STs is prevailing in all the states and all over the country. The number of groups demanding for one or the other status is increasing manifold. One is having genuine difficulty in understanding this phenomena yet it is very true of contemporary India. Original implications of the constitution have been given a goby. Many are searching for their bygone roots. If this is not enough to find their moorings, the next best path is they mobilize people, organize themselves, begin agitation, make a political issue and eventually succeed as it also suit the interests of the politicians to divide people on different pretext, nurse unrest to reap a rich harvest.

Barring North East, Chotanagapur area in Bihar, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and other areas where there is greater concentration

of tribes, and that they are well organized, so that political leaders and governments cannot ignore them, in the rest of the country where the tribal population is thinly spread, very little attention is paid to their problems. Only in places where some NGO's are present we do get instances of organizations and tribal problems monitored and echoed.

In Karnataka tribal population is very small. Hardly 4-5 districts, Uttara and Dakshina Kannada, Coorg, Mysore, Chikkamagalur districts include tribal population. Yet people belonging to Sudra Varna categories are organizing and demanding that they be included in the ST group. It is just the reservation benefits that cause heartburn to others, while they have hardly anything in common with STs. As late as March 1996, the Uru Kurubas organized a state level convention to discuss problems and issues pertaining to the community. Then at the end, it was also decided and press statements were issued to the effect that Kurubas include Kadu Kurubas, Betta and Jenu Kurubas as well and not just Uru Kurubas. Such organized efforts create political pressure on the government and ruling party. Very few people indeed would be inclined to think this strategy either as misleading or depriving the already dispossessed.

Here it must be indicated that the Kadu Kurubas are also organized largely due to the work carried out by a voluntary organization among them. The DEED (Development through Education) located at Hunsur one of the Taluks in Mysore district was founded by one Dr. Gerry Pais, who had an earlier stint of social work at Calcutta with "Brothers to all Men", a Christian organization. Then he spent another decade working in Bihar, before moving over to Karnataka. He selected Hunsur Taluk and the organization was registered in 1980.

Though Gerry Pais is a qualified medical doctor, he saw to it that the organization would concentrate on education and allied aspects and did not make Health/Medicine as entry point to work among the Kadu Kurubas spread out in Hunsur and adjacent taluks Heggada Devana Kote (H.D. Kote) as well as Coorg district. However, Kadu Kurubas with sub-divisions like Betta Kuruba and Jenu Kuruba are found in large numbers in Hunsur Taluk.

Dr. Pais left Deed in 1990, after working among Kadu Kurubas for a decade. He is at the moment working for oxfam, but continues as a member of the Board of Directors. Now Mr. Nanjundaiah is the President of DEED and Mr. Sreekant, is the General Secretary-cum-Treasurer and Co-Ordinator.

In fact the political awareness and general awakening that is visible among the Kadu Kurubas, is almost the handi-work of Sreekant who has a Post-graduate degree in social work. He is assisted by a team of both tribal and non-tribal workers.

Two frontal organizations, namely Budakattu Krishikara Sangha (BKS) and Vanavasi Mahila Sangha (VMS) have emerged from the process of community organization initiated by DEED in early 1980's. BKS and VMS together to-day facilitate socio-political and economic advancement of the tribal community. It is these organizations which reacted to the press statements released by the Kurubara Sangha. Besides these two, there are a number of functional groups consisting mostly of tribals which are playing active role. In a sense, the Kadu Kurubas from Hunsur Taluk provide leadership to other Kadu Kurubas living in the adjacent taluk H.D. Kote, where multiple number of NGO's are operating leading to some amount of duplication, competition and confusion.

The numerical strength of the Uru Kurubas, given the fact that they are found through out the state in itself acts as a threat to a handful of Kadu Kurubas found mostly in Mysore and Coorg districts. There are a number of MPs, MLAs and Ministers, who can do the wire-pulling at different times and levels to pressurise and persuade the government to club all Kuruba sub-divisions into one group. Also Uru Kurubas are better equipped in terms of education, occupational diversity, property, funds and so on. As there is equally a good deal of awareness and general awakening among Kadu Kurubas, the aspirations of the Uru Kurubas may be thwarted and may take much longer time than expected. While Uru Kurubas are a force at state level, the tribals are emerging at National level. This becomes evident

from the fact that tribal people and their leaders were able to converge at Delhi during February 1996 to press the Central Government to implement Bhuria Committee Report and other demands especially tribal self-rule which goes with tribal autonomy. In this the representatives from Budakattu Krishikara Sangha (BKS) did play an active role. The government of India, as well as other political party leaders have expressed support to their demand.[i] It remains to be seen how soon the new government under changed circumstances can fulfill the promise of granting tribal autonomy and extend other facilities.

In the chapter that follows field data drawn from four districts covering about 601 Uru Kuruba informants will be analyzed. Incidentally this analysis should also highlight the caste-tribe differences. While in many ways continuous interaction and impact of caste system on tribals has occurred historically, the reverse i.e., castes taking on the tribal life-style has seldom come about. At the end of 20th century it looks as though, many caste groups are donning tribal mantle, while caste system itself is solidifying, all because of 'reservation benefits'.

CHAPTER – IV

KURUBAS OF KARNATAKA

An attempt is made here to highlight the two broad divisions having the same nomenclature. This will be followed by reference to further sub-divisions with a number of differential connotations. The Kadu Kurubas, could be termed as almost jungle tribe till recently. They are confined mostly to Mysore and Coorg districts of Karnataka. They used to live in and around forests and hilly tracts, mostly as food gatherers sometimes practising shifting cultivation. Among Kadu Kurubas there are further endogomous sub-divisions like Betta Kuruba, Jenu Kuruba and Mullu Kuruba. Mullu Kurubas are mostly found in Nilgiri area of Tamilnadu. Thus the present study covers only Betta Kuruba and Jenu Kuruba.

The Uru Kurubas (village) identified only as Kurubas henceforth are found throughout Karnataka villages, towns and cities. Since the census do not record caste, it is not possible to figure out the population of Kurubas. The two Backward Classes Commissions during 1970s and 1980s headed by L.G. Havanur and Venkataswamy have culled out from various census and other reports, sometimes going back to the turn of the century to project the present Kuruba population. The state level Kuruba Sangha has also Kuruba population estimate. While the Sangha gives an inflated population figure, the figures taken by the Commissions also have drawback. In Havanur Commission Report for instance Kadu Kurubas figure, even if it is only in limited numbers, from a few more districts in Karnataka. Details are given in the following Tables. (See. p. 44-47)

In the field data also, from the Districts of Bellary, Chitradurga, Dharwad few of them have returned as Kadu Kurubas along with other sub-groups.

Thurston does give a descriptive account of Kurubas both tribe and caste including some myths of origin. He quotes earlier works by Bishop Caldwell and Stuart particularly the latter stating: "they (Kurubas) are the modern representatives of the ancient pallavas

who were once so powerful in southern India". In addition Thurston also records another myth which suggests that originally Kurubas were Kapus. There is also reference to similar myth of royal origin in L.Ananta Krishna Iyer's work where he tries to explain away the Kadu and Uru Kuruba differences to geographic differences and environment, when the Pallavas were over run by the Chola and Chalukya chiefs during 7-8th century A.D.

The entire exercise seeking to explain the origin of Kurubas is shrouded in speculative history, specially when there is more than one myth. To lump the Kadu Kurubas and Uru Kurubas to the same roots is confusion worst confounded. The census figures given in table A.B.C. according to Havanur commission report are also misleading. If Kadu Kurubas and Jenu Kurubas are found in about 10 districts of the state as early as 1961, it is somewhat debatable as much as it SOUNDS MYSTERIOUS. Since census data is not foolproof and Havanur commission projected state Kuruba population having base year as 1941 for some districts, 1931, for some others others and taking it backwards to 1911 and 1901 for still some more districts as could be gleaned from table- A. Thus it is to be taken with a good deal of reservation. Precisely this whole exercise was done to provide reservation benefits under the Backward Classes category.

In Venkataswamy report by 1984, there is a further rise approximately 4,67,000 in Kuruba population. While the Kurubara Sangha claims that their population is about 10% of the state's population and they have been denied justice specially in education and appointments, hence they should be included under ST category, they have been organizing protest meetings time and again to pressurise the government. As a rule they have always included the Kadu Kurubas, Betta Kurubas and Jenu Kurubas as members of Kuruba community. Though visibly there is little or no evidence of any kind of interaction between the two groups.

According to Venkataswamy report. "Kurubas are a pastoral community of shepherds. Traditionally they rear sheep and also weave

Table – A :

According to L.G. Havanur Commission Report 1975
Kuruba population in the State in 1972 – 20,32,032
Percent (%) to the State population – 6.77

Sl. No.	District	Base Year	Base year Population	Estmtd. Popln. for 1971	1971 Estmtd. Popln. As per Reorganisation of State in 1956	Estmtd. Popln. for 1972
1	Bangalore	1941	55,248	128,319	128,390	132,733
2	Chikmagalore	1941	32,041	65,876	65,876	67,411
3	Chitradurga	1941	47,648	91,679	91,679	94,218
4	Hassan	1941	49,002	86,052	86,052	88,031
5	Kolar	1941	46,449	72,372	72,372	73,328
6	Mandya	1941	42,468	77,237	77,137	79,328
7	Mysore	1941	111,686	196,780	218,209	223,511
8	Shimoga	1941	26,160	61,607	61,607	63,326
9	Tumkur	1941	55,349	94,259	94,259	96,050
10	Bellary	1911	100,997	187,414	116,609	119,250
11	Coorg	1901	7,373	15,940	15,940	16,240
12	S. Canara	1901	227	490	373	382
13	Belgaum	1931	83,310	163,116	155,495	158,947
14	Bijapur	1931	122,367	232,081	232,011	236,558
15	Dharwad	1931	106,031	200,462	200,462	204,471
16	N. Canara	1931	1,185	2,408	2,408	2,464
17	Bidar	1911	62,241	120,586	56,663	58,040
18	Gulbarga	1911	100,821	181,810	152,284	165,984
19	Raichur	1911	105,047	189,589	156,942	161,462

Source :

Report of the First Karnataka Backward Classes Commission – Chairman L.G. Havanur, 1975, 4 Volumes, Bangalore.

Table – B :

According to L.G. Havanur Commission Report 1975
Jenu Kuruba (ST) population in the State in 1972 – 4,670
Percent (%) to the State population – 0.01

Sl. No.	District	Base Year	Base year Population	Estmtd. Popln. for 1971	1971 Estmtd. Popln. As per Reorganisation of State in 1956	Estmtd. Popln. for 1972
1	Bangalore	1961	659	-	-	916
2	Chikmagalore	1961	2	-	-	2
3	Chitradurga	1961	17	-	-	23
4	Hassan	1961	31	-	-	39
5	Kolar	1961	95	-	-	114
6	Mysore	1961	2,358	-	-	3,011
7	Shimoga	1961	19	-	-	25
8	Tumkur	1961	120	-	-	146
9	Bellary	1961	322	-	-	404
			TOTAL			4,670

Source :

Report of the First Karnataka Backward Classes Commission – Chairman L.G. Havanur, 1975, 4 Volumes, Bangalore.

Table – C :

Showing according to L.G. Havanur Commission Report 1975 Kadu Kuruba (ST) population in the State in 1972 – 5,135

Percent (%) to the State population – 0.02

Sl. No.	District	Base Year	Base year Population	Estmtd. Popln. for 1972
1	Bangalore	1961	369	513
2	Chikmagalore	1961	28	35
3	Chitradurga	1961	22	29
4	Hassan	1961	22	28
5	Kolar	1961	23	27
6	Mandya	1961	69	91
7	Mysore	1961	3,001	3,821
8	Shimoga	1961	94	123
9	Tumkur	1961	122	148
10	Bellary	1961	255	320
				5,135
11	Coorg	1961	9,246 (Kuruba-ST)	11,020

Source :

Report of the First Karnataka Backward Classes Commission – Chairman L.G. Havanur, 1975, 4 Volumes, Bangalore.

Table – D :

Showing the Kuruba Caste Composition of population in the State (T. Venkaraswamy Report)

Sl. No.	District	Caste Competition of population
1	Bangalore	139,582
2	Belgaum	866,247
3	Bellary	120,245
4	Bidar	76,426
5	Bijapur	302,093
6	Chikmagalore	81,984
7	Chitradurga	121,052
8	S. Canara	256
9	Dharwad	278,488
10	Gulbarga	171,509
11	Hassan	100,972
12	Kodagu	2,706
13	Kolar	98,481
14	Mandya	83,481
15	Mysore	237,386
16	Raichur	243,215
17	Shimoga	74,010
18	Tumkur	106,843
19	N. Canara	5,735
	TOTAL	3,110,711

Table – D1 :

Showing population of Caste/Communities of the State of Karnataka – As per See Survey, 1984 (According to (T. Venkaraswamy Commission Report)

Sl. No.	Reiligion	Caste	Population	% of total Population
1	Hindu	Kuruba	25,01,465	6.92

Source :

Report of the Second Backward Classes Commission – Chairman T. Venkataswamy, 1986, 2 Volumes, Bangalore.

wollen blankets". Known by different names in different states, Kuruba is the only community that is spread all over the country asserts the vocal members of the Sangha. They also claim antiquity, royal origin, but say somehow they have been wronged. To set it right now they should be included in Scheduled Tribe category.

On Kadu Kurubas and Jenu Kurubas of Coorg, Venkataswamy report says that they live in jungles and still lead a primitive life. They are different from these Kurubas and are included under Scheduled Tribe list".

In the People of India – National series – the Scheduled Tribes, edited by K.S.Singh, there is a reference to Jenu Kuruba population jumping from 6656 in 1971 to 34,747 in 1981. This increase in their population might be due to the enumeration of the Kuruba, a non-Scheduled community outside coorg district. Similarly the book contains information on Kadu Kurubas and Betta Kurubas. Here again, their population jumps from 8,192 in 1971, to 2,09,677 according to 1981 census. The sudden increase in their population during 1981 census could be due to the inclusion of another community i.e., kuruba which is not a Scheduled Tribe in Karnataka.

Similarly Nanjunda Rao in his study of Tribal people of Heggadadevana Kote (H.D.Kote) between 1971-81 finds a phenomenal 30.4% annual increase of Tribals[1]. While the total tribal population of H.D.Kote taluk according to 1971 census was 6,686, by 1981, it shot up to 20,332, the reason being a number of other groups of 'Nayak' 'Parivara' 'Yarava' were added to the list of Scheduled Tribes by 1981 census. Also due to strict conservation measures considerable number of tribals were displaced from the forest area according to 1981 census. The following figures illustrate it abundantly.

	Begur jungle	Kakana Kote forest
1971	519	859
1981	126	544

This suggests that there has been a sustained effort to enlarge

1. Nanjunda Rao. L. 1988. Tribals in Heggadadevana Kote Taluk, (Mysore District) unpublished survey report p.26.

the tribal category by including non-Tribals even as the Kurubas have kept up the claim that Kadu Kuruba, Betta Kuruba, Jenu Kuruba, Kurubas drawn from Coorg as well as kurubas proper are synonymous and so to be considered as such by the government.

Tribals imbibing caste features is a long drawn-out slow process which has been taking place since the time of British administration. But the reverse process, whereby well established caste-groupings hankering for tribal status is a new phenomena in Indian history particularly in post-independence period. Given this process and various governments conceding to these demands raises more serious problems than its solves. For in recent decades one after another, caste groups have started urging for S.C., S.T. status. If this process were to lead for unification of such groups, it would have countered the evil effects of caste system. But this is not the case. Just as religious conversions, reform movements, Sankritization have lead to further divisions and sub-divisions in caste groups, scheduling will perhaps create additional cleavages. Competing groups will add to the existing rigidity and divisive forces. This can be further substantiated with reference to B.R.Ambedkar. In his efforts to trace the origin of untouchability Ambedkar asserted that Indian untouchables – their ancestors – were formerly Buddhists. He tried to give it a historical significance how religious differences swung Hinduism into action and it revived its former glory at the cost of Buddhism under the rule of the Gupta dynasty.

While part of it, the golden age of Hinduism, under the Guptas is historical, the Buddhist ancestry of later untouchables is at best speculative, and it is doubtful if all the 'untouchable' communities can testify this. The fact, that conversion to Buddhism since Ambedkar's time have attracted only particular segments of untouchable groups, in Maharastra, it is confined to Mahar caste groups, while in U.P. a few Chamars have embraced Buddhism. It has not spread all over India and among all former `untouchable' castes groups. Those who embraced Buddhism in the wake of Ambedkar's crusade against Hinduism are generally known as Neo-Buddhists. They are further

identified as Mahar-Buddhists and Chamar Buddhists. These are highlighted in the works of Sunanda Patwardhan[1] and Owen, M.Lynch[2]. All that is suggested here is that it is in the nature of caste system to subsume everything including contradictions. The present attempt to get included in the schedule even by otherwise upper caste groups is for purposes of getting pecuniary benefits, which perhaps will deprive and render the other deserving groups to continue to live in misery.

With these general observations, we will now turn to an analysis of data obtained from the Kuruba informants. The study has covered a sample of 601, Kuruba households spread over four districts of Karnataka. Bellary, Chitradurga, Dharwad and Mysore districts have roughly about 1/3 of state Kuruba population (6,41,450 out of 20,31,734, L.G.Havanoor Commission projection for 1972). While it is a little less than ¼ of total Kuruba population (7,57,171 out of 31,01,465, Venkataswamy commission 1984). Also the reasons for selecting these four districts is based on different administrative divisions. While Chitradurga and Mysore districts were in 'Old Mysore', under native rulers, Bellary and Dharwad were at the periphery of Madras and Bombay presidency. With the formation of unified Karnataka in 1956, Kannada speaking areas of Madras and Bombay presidency have got merged with 'Old Mysore'. Now Dharwad district has provided a place for Kuruba Mutt. The first Mutt head who has assumed charge of spiritual leadership hails from Mysore district.

In Mysore district the study covers 145 Kuruba households. These are spread over District Headquarters and villages in different Taluks as well as extensions in towns and cities. In all about 9 places are covered.

In Dharwad 151 households are included. These are spread over to 14 places, including villages, district headquarters, other cities and towns.

One hundred fifty Kuruba households constitute the sample in Bellary District. As usual district headquarters, towns and taluk headquarters and villages, all add upto 12 places.

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1. Patwardhan, Sunanda (1973) Change among India's Harijan's, Maharastra a Case Study, Delhi orient Longman.
2. Lyncy, Owen, M. (1969) The Politics of Untouchability Social Mobility and Social Change in a Society of India, New yark, Columia University Press.

In Chitradurga 155 households are studied. Two cities, two taluk headquarters – towns and four villages, a total of 8 places are included.

The details of the sample drawn from the four districts along with places is shown in the chart below. It is also laid out in the maps at the end of the Book. As far as possible interior places as well as those places on trunk routes were included. Depending upon the households and availability of informants, the sample size was adjusted. The total sample drawn from each district is not given to large scale variation. The highest is 10, while the lowest is 4 and the remaining ones are in-between these two figures. Thus, in the absence of known source of data on the caste, the study has strived to cover as many places and households to enable objective assessment.

Chart Showing the sample covered from 4 districts, along with places and size.

A.

	Mysore District.	*Nos. Covered*
1.	Kurubageri	10 Mys. City
2.	Thonachikoppal	10 „ Extn.
3.	Kurubarahalli (Alanahalli)	10 „ Extn.
4.	Hosabandikeri	10 „ City
5.	Siddaramana Hundi	20 Village
6.	Basavanapura & Amachavadi	25 „
7.	Kalale	20 „
8.	Kalana Hundi	20 „
9	Gandhana Halli	20 „
	Total	*145*

B.

	Dharwad District.	*Nos. Covered*
1.	Dharwad	21 - City
2.	Gadag	10 - City
3.	Hubli	10 - City
4.	Amminbhavi	10 Village

5.	Amargol	10 Village
6.	Byhatti	10 „
7.	Chikkalingada Halli	10 „
8.	Hebsur	10 „
9.	Heelada Halli	10 „
10.	Kanakapura	10 „
11.	Medleri	10 „
12.	Navilur	10 „
13.	Udagatti	10 „
14.	Huilgol	10 „
	Total	*151*

C.

	Bellary District.	*Nos. Covered*
1.	Bandi Hatti	10 Bel. City
2.	Kuruba Oni	20 „
3.	Hospet, Kurubaoni	20 Town
4.	Patelnagar	10 Extn.
5.	Hoovina Hadagali	12 Tq. Hq.
6.	Kamalapura	12 Village
7.	Krishnanagar	14 „
8.	Mylara	12 „
9.	Hosahalli	10 „
10.	Hire Hadagali	10 „
11.	Uchchangidurga	10 „
12.	Voddu	10 „
	Total	*151*

D.

	Chitradurga District.	*Nos. Covered*
1.	Chitradurga	20 Chi. City
2.	Davanagere	30 City Tq. Hq.
3.	Harihara	25 Town Tq. Hq.

4.	Hosadurga	20 Town Tq. Hq.
5.	Bilichodu	15 Village
6.	Banuvalli	15 „
7.	Harthikote	15 „
8.	Lokikere	15 „
	Total	*155*

All the 601 informants have declared that they belong to Halumatha which is another popular nomenclature for Kuruba. The details about clan or what is known as Badagu in Kannada makes interesting reading of an impressive list. The objects/animals and other names which appear as clan names not all can be considered as 'totemic'. For instance Chandra gula, Rani gula, Sangam gula, are not necessarily totemic objects/animals, while Hamsagula, Churigula, Belligula would indicate objects/animals, birds involved. Clan/Bedagu is like gotra among the twice born. It regulates marriage institution. Just as sagotra marriages are not permissible, since all members are considered as related to one another as brothers and sisters descending from a common ancestor, members with same clan name or belonging to same bedagu do not intermarry.

In Mysore district 145 Kuruba households with 8 not responding are distributed in 31 different clans. In Dharwad district 143 households have listed 46 clans. Bellary district tops the list. Seventy six clan names are listed by 143 respondents while in Chitradurga district we get 49 clan names covering 143 households. One interesting point is that there are very few common clan names found in all the four districts.

All the 601 kuruba household in the sample have stated that they belong to Kuruba caste. Also all of them have stated that they belong to Halumatha sub-caste. Irrespective of the places, villages, towns and cities and geographical variations like Mysore and Dharwad and spatial distance, the entire sample has responded uniformly. Since Halumatha and Kuruba are synonymous, it cannot be concluded as sub-caste and caste.

In response to another question, intended to cross-check the information on sub-castes with ranking, the informants from the four districts show variation as well as similarity. For Mysore district 56 respondents state they do not know their sub-caste. The rest of them have listed 21 sub-castes. One very interesting feature is informants give top three ranks to Kadu Kuruba, Mullu Kuruba, Jenu Kuruba and 5th rank to Betta Kuruba. None of these sub-castes are specified as STs. But this information which figures these as Kuruba sub-castes is mis-leading and incorrect. For both in Havanur and Venkataswamy Commission reports, Kadu Kuruba, Jenu Kuruba and Betta Kurubas found mostly in Mysore and Coorg districts constitute STs. Drawing upon the ST sub-divisions and the use and purpose for which the Kurubas are intending thus becomes clear. Mullu Kurubas are not found in Karnataka. But by giving Mullu Kuruba also as one of Kuruba sub-caste, the respondents get caught in the scheme unawares.

In Dharwad district also 32 out of 151 respondents are not aware of the sub-caste. The remaining respondents have given 31 sub-caste names. Among them Kadu Kuruba, Jenu Kuruba, Betta Kuruba are given 1, 3, 5 rank respectively. Surprisingly no Mullu Kuruba is brought in. However, none of the above sub-castes or even ST group is mentioned for Dharwad district in Havanur Commission Report. The trend in Dharwad district seems that Kurubas in small towns and big towns are so organized to register Kuruba Sanga (caste organization) with a prefix 'kadu-kuruba'. With the blessings of the caste guru at Kaginele, organizations are rolling out from all over the district. Here again they are not STs. This point provides an interesting departure.

There are 21 sub-castes identified in Bellary district by 150 sample respondents. Here also Kadu Kuruba, Jenu Kuruba, Mullu Kuruba, Betta Kuruba are given, 2, 3, 12, 15 rank respectively. Jenu Kuruba and Kadu Kuruba ST groups are listed in Havanur

Commission. In addition, two sub-divisions are added in Bellary district by our informants. None of the four divisions are described as ST. Thus these attempts become obvious efforts at incorporation of caste group in Tribe, though they are not in the scheduled list.

In Chitradurga district out of 155 respondents, 22 have not responded. An impressive list of 28 sub-castes among the Kurubas are listed. Again Kadu Kuruba, Jenu Kuruba occupy 2nd and 3rd rank, while Mullu Kuruba and Betta Kuruba are given 9th and 10th position in the list. Both Jenu Kuruba and Kadu Kuruba are recorded for Chitradurga district in Havanur Commission Report. But they constitute ST group. Now two more sub-groups are added by the informants. But none of them have claimed ST status yet.

Traditionally some caste groups are common and they appear uniformly for all the four districts. For instance there are the Hathi Kankana and Unne Kankana groups, the cotton thread or the woollen thread which is used to tie Kankana (betel leaf roll) to the right wrist of bride and groom and few married women and men who play certain ritual roles during weddings.

Then Bili and Kari Kambali groups indicating white or black colour blankets, the group members use mostly during ritual observances. Similarly Dodda Kambali, Sanna Kambali divisions refer to the big or small size of blankets used by respective groups. Also Hande Kuruba group is listed.

Certain regional variations are striking. For instance in Mysore district Gonda, Raja gonda, Dhanagar, and Soliga are also included. Any meaningful explanation for these have to be found from literature that has sprang up in the recent past by Kuruba activists. Otherwise it is very difficult to explain how Soligas could figure among Kurubas. Soligas are another tribal group (ST) found in Mysore district.

In Dharwad district Gonda, Bhagi, Rahuth and Dhanagar divisions figure. There is also reference to Bili and Kari eli, (white and black leaf) presumably betel leaf that is used on ritual occasions.

The Odeyar sub-division among Kurubas constitute the priestly section. They are found sparingly. In Mysore district we have them in Kalale village. They are found in Tumkur district, and are represented in Dharwad district. They are vegetarians and tee-totallers. They take girls in marriage from Kurubas but do not give their daughters in marriage to Kurubas. They enjoy higher ritual status and so should enjoy highest rank, which however, is missing in the information furnished by our respondents.

In Bellary, Dhanagar Kuruba is recorded, along with dodda, sanna and kari kambali divisions. Odeyar division is also represented but they come almost at the fag end of the rank list.

For Chitradurga district, again Rajagonda, Shivagonda and Gonda groups are recorded. In addition we have sub-castes which are not recorded in the other three districts. Nonaba, Gangadikara, Elava Kuruba are cases in point. Amidst all these varieties, the four divisions found among tribals find a pride of place in the rank list. Only significant difference is tribal divisions belong to scheduled tribe, while with the same name Kuruba sub-castes remain in the domain of caste, only future will tell when they will shift to the tribal side.

Kadu Kuruba tribal elders are of the opinion that 1961 census have wrongly recorded about Jenu Kurubas and Kadu Kurubas outside Mysore and Coorg districts. They also contest the census showing them as Hindus. Census enumeration have become somewhat mechanical. The persons engaged for this work, mostly primary school teachers follow the line of least resistance and fill up the columns often without ascertaining the facts. The Jenu Kuruba, Kadu Kuruba population shown for the ten districts including Mysore district is imaginary. The Kurubas returning all the tribal sub-divisions as sub-castes of Kuruba caste group and ranking them in a hierarchy is rather unique.

From the above exercise which are the outcome of systematic planning with some benefits accruing to the efforts even if belated, let us turn our attention how Kurubas look at the caste hierarchy, where they place themselves and others. Whom do they consider as superior,

and which castes rank below them and so remain inferior. Also views regarding the abolition of caste, and the uses to which caste organization can be put are gathered. Opinion regarding interdining, inter-caste marriages are collected. All this information is necessary for an objective assessment of the on-going efforts to reach the desired end.

An overwhelming majority of Kurubas 121, 95, 104, 112 for Mysore, Dharwad, Bellary and Chitradurga districts respectively claim middle rung position in the caste hierarchy. A few i.e., 31 members claim as belonging to High caste, while about 133 report as belonging to lower category, only five members constitute don't know category.

In all the four districts covered by this study Kurubas are more or less unanimous with regard to castes that rank higher and those which are considered as lower. Among the higher castes, Lingayats including nearly all sub-castes and priestly caste of Jangams, followed by Brahmins, Jains, Urs, Shetty (Vaishya) Vokkaligas with sub-castes, Reddy, Uppara, Marathas and Weavers (Devanga) are listed. Caste that rank lower to Kurubas consists of SCs and STs. As many as 580 respondents concur on this point. Ediga (Toddy tappers), Madiwala (washerman), Parivara with all regional names for the group, then Besta (fisherman) Muslims, Christians, Lambani, Bhovi, Korava, Begar, the last four being covered by SC group are mentioned.

This suggests that Kurubas are aware of the significance of caste rank in the hierarchy and accordingly, they treat some with respect and discriminate against the lower castes. Given the fact that Kadu Kurubas, Betta Kurubas, Jenu Kurubas and Mullu Kurubas constitute ST, so they should rank much lower than Kurubas probably on par with SCs. Yet Kurubas have 'adopted' or 'copied' these names and present them as sub-castes does make it confusing and ticklish.

Barring 65 out of 601, Kurubas do state that they have heard of Kadu Kuruba and allied sub-divisions of the tribe. It looks as though they have forgotten about similar groups being claimed as

Kuruba sub-castes. Yet to the question, if Kadu Kurubas and Kurubas are related, 428 respondents have said 'No' followed by 131 positive response and 42 no response. A total of 515 respondents have stated that Kurubas are Hindus and represent caste. Also a total of 515 say that they do interact with both higher and lower castes. To the question if Kurubas would treat lower castes as equals 463 say 'Yes'. To a further question whether they equate themselves with higher castes 401 respondents say 'Yes', the remaining 200 say 'No' seemingly there is no contradiction, even as they belong to upper caste, they could be magnanimous to lower castes also.

With regard to opinion about the abolition of castes, 404 out of 601 respondents are not in favour of abolition. The remaining 193 members are in favour of abolition with 4 members having no opinion. Of those who want abolition of caste system and those who are in favour of the continuation of caste, offer various reasons for the utility hence retention of the system. Some are even emphatic about it. The following are a few opinions for and against caste sytem. Those who are for the system say that "the caste system plays an important role in our day-to-day life, so is essential. Also it comes from generation to generation". "It is inevitable to all human beings". "It promotes status, necessary for social and ritual life". "It fosters unity, easy to identify". "It should not be abolished but should continue". "Opinion against the caste system are few but perhaps equally important". "Human beings are one" "it creates inequality and promotes differentiation". "It leads to communal conflict and riots". "It is a big hurdle for development". "It is an obstacle to national integration, maintenance of unity, peace, so it should be destroyed". "It affects the modernization process adversely". "Merit should receive priority and not caste".

Atleast about 1/3 of the sample sound rational and seem to have realised the evil effects of caste system on human values, morality and society. If this is a genuine opinion and concern for the larger good of society it augurs well as a good omen though a small beginning.

If like-minded people from all walks of life should join this, they could as well set the best example of a secular society free from caste snobberies and help forget the ugly past. Unfortunately such moves historically have fizzled out under pressure from vested interest. The work of Buddha, Basava, Ambedkar, Kabir, a host of others including Vivekananda and Mahatma Gandhi seem to have fallen on deaf ears. It is a good sign that some respondents think along these lines, when the country is embroiled and surcharged with all kinds of caste based reservations provided by a generous political will.

To the question whether Kuruba sub-castes interdine and inter-marry with one another, 201 respondents have stated that they interdine, while 138 say they both interdine and inter-marry. One hundred sixty two declare that they do not have any such relationships and the remaining one hundred have not responded. Close on the heels of sub-caste inter-caste relationships, to the question on inter-caste marriages, a total of 423 respondents are not at all in favour of inter-caste marriages irrespective of high caste of boys or girls. Only 8 are in favour of high caste boys and 4 for upper caste girls. While 163 are agreeable for both boys and girls hailing from upper castes. But no one is interested in brides or grooms of tribal origin.

Some of the above facts lead themselves for generalizations. It can be said that Kurubas present a conservative, feudal group which is caught between aspirations and little achievement to make them clamour for tradition rather than modernization. Majority of Kurubas want to retain caste system. Interdining and inter-marriage even among the sub-castes is not necessarily a welcome proposition, while intercaste marriages do not find favour with a vast majority.

The above generalizations can be further highlighted with reference to occupation, education, political and religious aspirations which together have led them to organise on caste basis, trying to subsume tribal groups or declaring themselves as belonging to those very groups, with aspirations and hopes that one day they will reach there.

OCCUPATIONAL BACKGROUND

The traditional caste occupation of Kurubas is connected with sheep rearing and woollen blanket weaving. In Venkataswamy Commission Report they are described as a pastoral community of shepherds associated with sheep rearing and blanket weaving. Though traditional caste occupation is no longer valid for a large majority of caste groups in Indian society still some low status, polluting occupations are invariably associated with low castes. For instance leather work, toddy-tapping, scavenging are associated with low castes and still carry the stigma irrespective of the fact that members of a particular castes may have dissociated with traditional occupation long time ago. Also in many cases traditional occupation alone cannot provide economic security for all the members of the community/ caste.

With economic diversification members of a caste would usually take up other occupations as main or to supplement the income from traditional occupation. The number of people engaged in a particular occupation, nature of services rendered and the requirements of the community at large will decide whether or not different occupations are pursued in addition to traditional occupation. Agriculture has always provided an alternative. Now of course many more opportunities are available. However, some of the caste names are derived and continue to be associated with specific occupation, the Carpenter, Goldsmith, Chamar are cases in point.

In this study 163 have stated sheep rearing, another 292 as having both sheep rearing and blanket weaving as their occupation. Only 14 have not stated any occupation, while 132 are associated with agriculture, both as cultivators and coolie labourers engaged in agricultural operations. It is a very pertinent and striking point, that ¾ of the sample, 455 out of 601 are still pursuing traditional caste occupation. The fact is, that sheep rearing does not carry any stigma and these days it should sound more lucrative particularly when the government is giving encouragement and have separate Board to cater to the needs of the occupational group.

The socio-economic condition of the Kuruba caste reveals that the group is occupying middle rungs in caste hierarchy hence social status is better and there is no stigma and discrimination associated with the caste or the traditional caste occupation. The term Kuruba in common parlance is used to convey 'stupidity'. But these stereotypes are traditional 'jokes' or nick names, which are no longer valid for any community, yet this usage still surfaces occasionally, as an attribute to any unintelligent person irrespective of his/her caste. Similarly Dhanagar is used often as an abusive term to convey rustic or tough person and not the caste.

The occupational background of the Kurubas is discussed below. In the sample of 601, 298 have stated that they do own land while 142 have returned as agricultural labourers. There are 58 government employees, 49 working in private sector and 37 doing petty business. Twenty one informants have not responded, while the remaining 16 do hold land and so are engaged in agriculture, though they are not owners.

A negligible number of farmers are involved in wet land share-cropping (8) and 11 members have leased land varying from 1 to 5 acres. Another 147 own and cultivate wet land. Out of 147, 76 own 5 acres and more, 14 own 4 acres, 15 own 3 acres, 20 own 2 acres, while 21 members own one acre each. A total of 61 farmers grow paddy /wheat and 26 of them raise sugarcane on wet land. Open well, tube-well and canal are the main sources of water for irrigation.

Quite a few farmers are engaged in cultivation of dry land varying from 1 to 5 acres or more and another 22 are in share cropping partnership again in the range of 1 to 5 acres or more. While as may as 384 are in the category of not-applicable, the remaining 217 farmers do own dry land. Seventynine farmers own 5 or more acres, 26 four acres, 48 three acres, 47 two acres and 17 one acre. Rain water is the main source in dry land cultivation.

One point which need to be borne in mind while discussing land ownership, leasing or share cropping of different kinds of land, i.e.

wet land, dry land, garden and plantation, it is appropriate to recall, some members may appear under all the categories and so obviously they will represent the 'Creamy layer' among Kurubas. Generally ragi and jowar are raised as main crops on dry land. About 171 farmers are growing ragi and jowar in addition nearly 104 farmers are also growing various pulses.

Very few, about 19 farmers own garden land where vegetables are cultivated. Only two farmers have leased 2 acres each. No one is involved in share-cropping. Regarding plantations, there is only one person owning 5 or more acres of plantation and grow coffee and spices. No one has either leased or involved in share-cropping in this category.

A total of 320 farmers have given the value of the crops grown. As many as 101 have stated that their annual income from cultivation is less than Rs.3000/-, while 71 farmers receive Rs.3000 – 6000, some 20 farmers have stated that their annual income ranges between Rs.6000/- and 9000/-. Another 40 have said they derive between Rs. 9000/- and Rs.12000/- annual income from cultivation, while 88 have stated their annual income is more than Rs.12000/-.

There has been considerable diversification of economy and our informants seem to have taken due advantage of it. With modernization in agriculture, green revolution and white revolution have come about in the country, Karnataka is no exception. Also availability of irrigation facilities have lead to cultivation of cash crops, specially sugarcane and paddy. It is evident these opportunities have been availed by some of our respondents. Along with economic diversification occupational mobility has also come about. This becomes clear with reference to traditional caste occupation of sheep rearing and blanket weaving between generations.

The following table substantiates this

II. Table showing inter-generation change in Traditional occupation.

		DISTRICTS			
		Mys.	Dhar.	Bel.	Chi.
I.	Grand Father Generation				
	A) Sheep rearing	16	30	28	13
	B) Blanket Weaving	02	06	05	23
II.	Father's Generation				
	A) Sheep Rearing	01	18	18	04
	B) Blanket weaving	--	06	04	11
III.	Ego				
	A) Sheep rearing	01	05	06	01
	B) Blanket weaving	--	02	05	01

This gradual decline of traditional occupation is due to spread of education and gainful employment opportunities as well as industrialization that has been registered in the country in general and Karnataka in particular.

EDUCATION

Formal education and schooling system historically is rather a recent phenomena. This occurred just after the advent of British rule in India. The traditional system of education mostly religious in character had a very restricted application. SMRITI learning byrote by memory and SHRUTI, knowledge being whispered into the ears of the pupil (sishya) by teacher (guru) and Gurukulashram type of education effectively consisted of sacred sanskrit literature and it was mostly the Brahmins who were entitled to acquire it. Among the other two Twice – born categories viz., the Kshatriyas and Vaishyas, very limited knowledge in specific areas was imparted. Thus bulk of

Indian population were denied access to knowledge, which was hoarded and proved to be a source of strength, status and survival.

In medieval India under Muslim rulers, the Madrasas catered equally religious education to another religious group namely Muslims, although learning Persian and Arabic was open and Many Hindu scholars did acquire expertise in the two court languages.

The education system underwent drastic changes only after the British, more particularly the Christian Missionaries began their social service activities as a prelude to convert Indians to Christianity. But soon the British administration has to find ways and means of training and educating local people to be of assistance in the administration. With the government itself taking initiative, formal schools emerged as centres of secular learning. English language was introduced so that access to modern knowledge be available and the educated Indians could fill the lower ranks in administration. Notwithstanding the charges that are levelled against Lord Macualley regarding introduction of English as a ploy to produce 'clerks' to man and run British administration since people could not be brought from mainland to fill those jobs.. It must be acknowledged that it was a blessing in disguise to Indians at large. Introduction of English was welcome to many social reformers of the time in India. Raja Ram Mohan Roy supported the scheme wholeheartedly.

Whatever be the drawbacks of the scheme, it has placed India on World map. The already literate groups, Brahmins and other upper castes availed the opportunity to push ahead of others. It also had the salutary effect of secularising education for the first time. It was thrown open to all categories of Indians including the untouchable castes. But, here again the middle range, lower and lowest groups were slow to respond.

Even after nearly 50 years of freedom, in post-independence India there has been a clamour for reservation of seats in educational institutions especially in technical and professional courses like medicine, engineering and so forth.

All the Backward Classes Commissions since 1950s, Nagana Gowda, L.G. Havanur, Venkataswamy and Chinnappa Reddy, have assessed educationally forward or backward castes in terms of so many students i.e., percentage passing the S.S.L.C. examination out of 1000 total. Whether this kind of exercise would prove a reliable indicator is doubtful. Formal education need not be the 'be all' or 'end all' of human progress. For as it is for a long time learning – Education – was mostly confined to religious instructions which none of the people from Sudra varna and women in India could avail.

There could be other avenues to measure the forward-backward status of a given group. Here again there are flaws. Education is an individual acquired thing, while status in Indian caste system continues to be ascriptive group phenomena. This difference between ascriptive and achieved status should not be glossed over. However, since all the Backward Classes Commissions have made this as an important plank, it could be taken as one of the several important variables. The other variables like movable and immovable property, business, political and religious offices/position and so forth, even regional variation could mean such a lot of difference. Since the land ownership and annual income of the Kurubas is already covered, now let us turn to education as a factor that matters for status evaluation.

The total population covered by this study is 4102. Out of this 2168 are men and 1934 are women. All of them are Kannada speakers, although it could be expected that in Dharwad district Marathi is mixed, just as Telugu could get mixed in Bellary Kannada. The school and college going age-group between 5-20 years constitute about 1/3 of the population. ie., there are about 1486 out of total 4102 Population. When this figure is matched against those studying VII standard, S.S.L.C., P.U.C., Degree including Law, Medicine and Engineering, as well as those doing post-graduation and diploma courses far outnumber the age-group break-up given above.

There are 768 literates in 4102 strong Kuruba population. Majority of literates, 471 are from Dharwad, followed by 192 from

Chitradurga district. Bellary comes third with 61 literate people and Mysore least i.e., 44 members only. There is variation from district to district though not of considerable significance, it could be perhaps linked with the available facilities like educational institutions, hostels or similar assistance in the form of scholarships that may be forthcoming from the government, society, community and philanthropic organizations.

If we take formal schooling as an index of forward or backwardness of the group, it appears that the Kurubas are not doing so badly.

The number of children studying in 7th standard is as follows. There are 128, 163, 172, 220 in Mysore, Dharwad, Bellary and Chitradurga districts respectively. Those in S.S.L.C. are 86, 84, 87 and 146 in that order for the four districts. The students in pre-university classes are 44, 56, 46, and 75 while those studying Degree courses including law, engineering and medicine number 23, 48, 18, 47 for Mysore, Dharwad, Bellary and Chitradurga districts

There are only a few post-graduates and those who have done diploma courses in engineering and other subjects. In all there are 18 doing post-graduation, 5, 5, 2, 6 in this order. There are 48 candidates doing Diploma. Dharwad district tops the list with 36 candidates, followed by 9 from Chitradurga, and 2 from Bellary with a lone member from Mysore. The following table gives a comprehensive picture of the Kuruba community/caste vis-à-vis the educational attainments.* Though the over all picture is below the national/state average,(See p.68) yet it can be concluded that the community is not lagging behind in formal education, despite the fact, that most of the Sudra varna people including Kurubas are recent entrants in schools and colleges. This compares favourably with many caste-groups and communities who are yet to open their account specially holding a salaried post. One hundred twenty six members, 25, 39, 28, 35 in this order from the four district are holding salaried jobs in different government

departments, besides 3 doctors, 4 engineers and 5 lawyers. Barring 67 out of 601 respondents, the rest of them agree that education helps attain higher status, gives economic security, creates political consciousness leading to political mobilization of the group. Over and above it leads to progress and modernization. This awareness of the benefits of formal education should be channelled in right direction without proving detrimental to other communities and caste-groups.

The district Kuruba Sangha orgnization take initiative and they are also assisted by leaders to start and run educational institutions and hostels. Our informants have listed a number of such institutions for each district covered in this study. Dharwad tops the list with 27 institutions. Kaginele, where a Kuruba guru is installed recently is directly responsible for opening and running educational institutions with hostel facilities. Bellary accounts for 15 such institutions, while Chitradurga has 13 educational institutions with 13 hostels. Mysore district has 10 such institutions. Only about 180 respondents are positive regarding the good services rendered by the 'community educational' institutions. While 367 are unaware and therefore cannot say anything, 54 respondents are highly critical and sum up, in totally negative tone.

Formal education thus has opened up new avenues to people particularly those who were denied access to knowledge traditionally. Since independence the policy of 'protective discrimination' initiated in favour of SCs and STs has widened its scope as each state setup Backward Classes Commissions, which have suggested ways and means of combating the problems. OBCs also now are entitled for favoured treatment. Certain number of seats are reserved for them in institutions of higher learning as well as a quota in government jobs. The Mandal Commission at the All India level has recommended for 27% of seats and posts. However, all the caste groups are dissatisfied with the recommendations of various commissions both at state level and the central government level, since there is supreme court's raider

III * Table showing the Educational Attainments of Kurabas

Education Level		Literates	Secondary School	SSLC	PUC	Degree,Law, Engg.,Medical	Post - Graduate Degree	Others	Total
Mysore	F	29	80	57	35	15	5	1	222 (856)
	%	(13.06)	(36.03)	(25.67)	(15.76)	(06.75)	(02.25)	(00.45)	(25.93)
Dharwad	F	142	82	57	50	29	5	17	382 (1060)
	%	(37.17)	(21.46)	(14.92)	(13.08)	(07.50)	(01.30)	(04.45)	(36.03)
Bellary	F	31	92	54	33	19	2	2	233 (1069)
	%	(13.30)	(39.48)	(23.17)	(14.16)	(08.15)	(00.85)	(00.85)	(21.79)
Chitradurga	F	77	108	86	55	28	4	9	367 (1117)
	%	(20.98)	(29.42)	(23.43)	(14.98)	(07.62)	(01.08)	(02.45)	(32.85)
Total	F	279	362	254	173	91	16	29	1204 (4102)
	%	(06.80)	(08.82)	(06.19)	(04.21)	(02.21)	(00.39)	(00.70)	(29.35)

that reservation should not cross 50%. Despite this, some of the states have gone ahead with greater percentage of reservation. For a long time BC's and OBC's have been preying on SC, ST quota slyly often passing off for the one or the other by producing required certificate. But now they are emboldened, more organized to openly demand for sliceing and cutting down the quota for STs and giving it to them. It is not surprising when one of them an Ex-MAL belonging to parivara caste publicly demanded that Parivara's should be treated on par with STs and the reservation quota operating for the latter be shared between the two. Who knows he might even succeed if there is political will that backs him.

In the V chapter a similar analysis for Kadu Kurubas, the Tribal group will be made. Similarities if any as well as differences will be highlighted. Elimination of the 'creamy layer' among BCs and OBCs from reservation benefits is easier said than done. For even among the BCs and OBCs there are innumerable number of people below the 'poverty line'. But nobody not even their community leaders are bothered about them. The story of reservations in post independence India is a bundle of contradictions and corruption. Benefits are usually availed by the 'creamy layers'. But there is no check or action, much less an evaluation done about the scheme. A more rational method with builtin evaluation with provision for de-reservation should be worked out.

Kadu Kuruba Tribals, if at all they enjoy some reservation facilities it is largely due to the good coordinating work that is being done by some NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations) working among the Tribals. When castes are given tribal tag because they persist with their demands, that perhaps will sound the death-knell of tribal development. However, analysis of data should highlight the socio-economic and educational progress achieved by the tribals vis-à-vis kuruba caste-group.

CHAPTER V

KADU KURUBAS IN HADIS (SETTLEMENTS)

Kadu Kurubas and Jenu Kurubas are jungle tribes still leading a primitive life, constitute Scheduled Tribes and are different from other Kurubas according to Venkataswamy report. They are concentrated in Mysore and Coorg districts. The present study is however, confined to Mysore district involving two taluks. Hunsur Taluk has been studied and there is an NGO – DEED –working among the Kadu Kurubas for nearly 16-17 years. Heggada Devana Kote Taluk (H.D.Kote) adjacent to Hunsur taluk also has a large concentration of these Tribals. The study has drawn its sample from two areas namely Antharasanthe and N. Begur. But throughout, the area will be referred to as H.D.Kote only. Here also 4-5 NGO's are operating for several years. MYRADA, FEDINA-Vikasa, Swamy Vivekananda Youth Movement (SVYM) are only a few to mention. The study has covered a sample of 601 households. In Hunsur 301 households are selected while in H.D.Kote area we have selected 300, 150 each from N.Begur and Antharasanthe area. The term Kadu Kuruba for purposes of this study is considered as a generic term which includes the other three sub-divisions viz., Betta Kurubas, Jenu Kurubas and Mullu Kurubas (or Kurumbas). Mullu Kurubas are found mostly in Tamilnadu – Nilagiri – area, hence this division is not represented in the present study. Betta Kurubas (Hill Tribe) should be more close to Kadu Kurubas. While Jenu Kurubas are another group, much more numerous than the Betta Kuruba division.

The sample covers 119 Betta Kurubas (Kadu Kurubas) and 181 Jenu Kuruba households from H.D.Kote area, while 295 Jenu Kuruba and just 6 Betta Kuruba households are covered in Hunsur taluk. The chart showing the sample taluks along with places and size is set out in Table 1. The two groups are endogamous, do not interdine and follow different traditional occupations. Since the present

study concentrates on caste-tribe syndrome, the study consider Uru Kuruba (village Kuruba) and Kadu Kuruba as a point of departure between caste and tribe rather than the internal sub-division among the tribes themselves.

The tribals themselves have listed a number of differences that characterise the tribe and caste as well as differences between different sub-groups. Customs, traditions, rituals that demarcate caste-tribe and tribal sub-divisions are cited. Occupation, language, dress, food habits and importance attached to ancestors, including marriage patterns are different between tribe-caste, also amongst different tribal divisions. In one word the life style itself highlight these differences. Under these circumstances an overwhelming majority of Kadu Kurubas, 291 out of 300 for H.D.Kote area and 296 out of 301 in Hunsur taluk state that there is no blood relationship between the Kadu and Uru Kurubas. Neither of them therefore should be considered as the sub-divisions of the other. A majority i.e., 242 in H.D.Kote area and 278 in Hunsur taluk have stated the above. A negligible minority have expressed differently. For instance 9 informants in H.D.Kote and 5 in Hunsur say that there is relationship between Uru and Kadu Kurubas. Likewise 58 for H.D.Kote and 23 in Hunsur taluk have stated that Uru Kurubas are a sub-division.

Table : 1 showing the sample covered from 2 Taluks, along with places and size

	Hunsur Taluk	*N0. of. Households Covered*
1.	Bharathwadi	26
2.	Bille Hosahalli	37
3.	Bettada Hadi	10
4.	Chikka Hejjur	10
5.	Haralahalli	13
6.	Iyyanakere	31
7.	Kappanakatte	39

8.	Kere Hadi	09
9.	Kolavige	42
10.	Neralakuppe `A'	29
11.	Neralakuppe `B'	22
12.	Veerana Hosalli	33
	Total	*301*

H.D. kote Taluk	*No.of.Households Covered*
N. Begur Area	
1. Brahmagiri	19
2. Shile Masti Hadi	02
3. Devana Hadi	06
4. Donne Madana Hadi	07
5. Elichi katte	06
6. Hosahalli	15
7. Jaganakote	36
8. Kempana Hadi	29
9. Malada Hadi	27
10. Rajapura	09
Total	*150*

H.D. kote Taluk	*N0. of. Households Covered*
Antharasanthe Area	
1. Hunasekuppe `A'	18
2. Hunasekuppe `B'	19
3. Karapura Hadi	33
4. Kere Hadi	02
5. Malada Hadi	14
6. Manchegowdana Hadi	27
7. Seegur Hadi	37
Total	*150*

When we refer to the clan names among the Kadu Kurubas, they are so totally different from clans found among Kurubas. For instance Kannain Makka, Kalakar Makka, Kodu Mage, Kurel Mage and so forth suggest, that these names are different. There is not even the remotest possibility of connection between kadu kurubas and kurubas. The clan symbols constitute totemic objects, while in Hunsur area 295 out of 301 say so. The totemic object is considered sacred, therefore killing or eating the totemic object is taboo. About 298 and 295 Kadu Kurubas in H.D.Kote and Hunsur areas consider the clan totem as sacred. There are several totemic groups in a clan and hundreds of totem groups for the tribe as a whole. This is an interesting point of departure between the Kadu Kurubas and Kurubas. Some of the clan names also indicate gods and goddesses like Basaveswara, Madeswara, Maramma, Chowdamma and so on. Beside these, Kadu Kurubas have also identified benevolent and malevolent deities which will be discussed a little later.

An important characteristic feature of tribal society consists of its migratory nature from time to time and place to place. This may be due to several reasons. Firstly, since they still are in the habit of collecting food, hunting, once an area is exploited to the maximum and the people do not get enough food items to gather, it is likely they migrate to another area. With the banning of shifting cultivation by government and restricting entry of Tribals into forest area, even to collect minor forest produce, the tribals are forced to migrate to new places. Majority of the tribal households for a considerable period in the year, which includes, compulsorily one daily meal made from roots, berries, greens, tubers, collected from forest area, while settled cultivation is yet to take roots, are compelled to shift to new places. Whatever crops are saved from the depredations of wild animals and harvested from the fields is shared by the community which lasts from a few weeks to couple of months, rest of the period they have to find avenues to survive.

The migratory character of the Kadu Kurubas seem to be perennial and in contrast to Kurubas leading a settled life in villages. Even those Kurubas who raise flocks of sheep and take the flock for grazing in far off places, cannot be termed as migratory. Only couple of male members of the family will accompany the flock, but they will eventually return to the village. There are other reasons also for migration of Kadu Kurubas. In fact, we have information from both H.D.Kote and Hunsur area for a time span of nearly 50 years though majority of people migrated fall within 30 years span. The movement is from one Hadi to another, and occasionally from adjacent taluks. H.D.Kote taluk accounts for greater migration than Hunsur taluk.

The places from where they migrated, and the names of new places are also noted. Quite a few Kadu Kurubas from Coorg area (Kodagu) have migrated to Hunsur taluk. Likewise from Hunsur taluk also, Kadu Kurubas possibly migrate to Coorg both temporarily as well as permanently to work as wage labourers in Coffee estates. Earning livelihood seem to take precedence over other reasons for migration. A total of 56 respondents have stated this, i.e., 41 for H.D.Kote area, 15 for Hunsur area. The next important factor prompting migration consist of relatives who have settled in a place earlier. About 44, 23 for H.D.Kote and 21 for Hunsur, have given this as the reason for migration. Government officials by offering constitutional benefits have also lured the tribals to migrate. About 37 households, 35 for H.D.Kote and 2 for Hunsur have quoted this reason. Marriage is also one of the reasons. This is not the traditional patrilineal pattern, where married women usually join their husbands in his natal home. Among the tribals though patrilineal, either sex can join one another in his/her place. Quite frequently the newly wed couple set up independent family and parents-in-law's on both sides do not eat from the hands of married daughter or daughter-in-law. Only about 11 households, 5 from H.D.Kote and 6 from Hunsur have given that government ban on shifting cultivation lead to migration.

Migration thus can be seen as a routine matter among the Kadu Kurubas. For one or the other reasons, people keep migrating from one Hadi to another or to different Hadis in the taluk and sometimes outside the taluk and into another taluk. Even those who claim that they are resident in particular place-Hadi should have migrated here in distant past. In H.D.Kote 244 households out of 300, claim that they are permanent residents of the particular Hadis. Likewise there are 277 households in Hunsur taluk. The remainder of the households are migrants. The Kadu Kurubas also give reasons for migrating to specific places. About 39 households (26 H.D.Kote, 13 Hunsur) explain in terms of government assistance to tribal development schemes that attracted them. Another 23 respondents have stated 'security' as the cause. More than security against wild animals, perhaps Kadu Kurubas are threatened by a variety of people. Business people, contractors, forest officials, arrack dealers, covetous villagers in the nighbourhood, singly or in combination can pose a threat to life of the tribals. As an escape from these threats people migrate to safer places. The Kurubas on the contrary are a well settled rural community who have now entered the towns and cities as well.

The sample covers a total population of 2891, of which 1384 people are from H.D.Kote and 1507 come from Hunsur taluk. Out of 1384, 703 are men and 681 are women, while the corresponding figure for Hunsur are 782 men and 725 women. Men outnumber women in both the taluks. According to Havanur Commission, the Kadu (Betta) and Jenu Kuruba population in Mysore district for the base year 1961 was 3001, and 2358, the projected population for 1972 was 3821 and 3001 respectively. Nanjunda Rao's report in addition to Kadu Kurubas, also include another 3-4 tribes found in H.D.Kote taluk. The sample taken for this study is adequate and enables to draw some valid conclusions.

OCCUPATION AND ECONOMIC STATUS

There are a number of constitutional measures for the economic upliftment of STs in post independence India. But the main drawback is tardy implementation of the scheme. Official apathy coupled with tribal's ignorance as well as lack of notion of private property, are also reasons. In his report on the tribals in Heggada Devana Kote taluk L.Nanjunda Rao has brought this out vividly. The tribals do not bother to know location of land if some land is allotted to them under the special component plan or in some other way. Nor do the revenue department officials, Inspectors or Block Development Officers (BDO) show interest and take intiative in informing or actually showing the spot. The tribals do not frequent offices to impress upon the officers. The net result is the land allotted to tribals is often 'annexed' by the neighbouring peasants and many a time the 'legal' tribal owner works as a wage labourer on his own land.

Some tribals of course fall prey to the small time money lenders and eventually the pledged land is taken over by the money lender. Even government legislation prohibiting non-tribals from purchasing land from tribals remain ineffective. The ground reality and conditions prevalent just cannot be rectified by mere legislation. Much of the land that is in possession of the tribals here is government allotted land, which is procured to the people by the efforts made by the non-governmental organizations working in these places.

Considering the occupational diversity of the tribals, it can be summed up as rather poor. Traditionally Betta Kurubas are associated with basket making. But bamboo is not freely available from the forests. They have to depend upon the supply that is made available by Government agencies. There are about 60 households from H.D.Kote area, drawn mostly from Brahmagiri and surrounding villages which are engaged in Basket making while only two households are engaged in basket making from Hunsur taluk. Marketing the

bamboo product is a problem for tribals. They usually carry them head loads to nearby villages where weekly shandies are held. Since the finish is somewhat crude, the price is naturally low. Bamboo products including baskets, winnowing pans with fine finish are now easily available in town and city centres, with which the tribal products cannot compete.

Overwhelming number of households are engaged in agriculture, mostly as wage earning coolies (labourers). Nearly 255 out of 300 households in H.D.Kote taluk and 299 out of 301 households for Hunsur area have returned as agricultural coolies. Besides, a few of these families might be cultivating their own land which is neither substantial nor the produce from the land can free them from hunger.

The Kadu Kuruba tribals in H.D.Kote and Hunsur taluks do own both dry land, some wet land fit for cultivation. A total of 38 households own 434 acres of dry land in H.D. Kote area. It varies from 1 to 5 acres per household though a good number come from those holding 2 acres and 3 acres, i.e., 98 households own 349 acres. In Hunsur 184 households own a total of 523 acres of dry land. One Hundred and fifty nine households own 462 acres ranging from 2,3, and 4 acres per household. Generally ragi, jowar, horsegram and some pulses as well as cotton and tobacco are raised. There is no guarantee of crops until they are harvested because of the depredations by the wild animals. Also inadequate agricultural input, bullocks for ploughing, improved variety seeds, fertiliser and other resources are lacking or extremely meagre. Even households which own land and cultivate it, have to hire out their labour to supplement income as well as continue to pursue traditional occupations like basket making, honey collection and gathering minor forest produce like fuel, roots, tubers, greens for consumption.

In addition to dry land, the Kadu Kurubas also own some wet land. A total of 149 households in H.D.Kote area own 169 acres of wet land. One hundred thirty nine households own one acre each and 10 households own 3 acres each. In Hunsur taluk, 52 acres of

wet land is owned by 26 households, one acre each by 8 households, 2 acres by 13 households, 3 acres by 2 and 4 acres by 3 households respectively. Mostly paddy is grown. The problems which confront dry cultivation seem to reappear in wet cultivation as well. About 4 households in Hunsur area also own 7 acres of government waste land which is used for grazing and other purposes.

One point that can be singled out regarding the economic activities of the Kadu Kurubas is that in spite of best intention of some of the government officers to extend as far as possible all the constitutional safeguards, and best efforts made by the N.G.O's to procure them, little progress is in evidence. They continue to be engaged equally in food gathering rather than in food production. Given this scenario, Kurubas are far ahead both in ownership, cultivation and food production. There is good deal of economic diversification, while their association with traditional occupation shepherding is marginalized and may disappear by the beginning of next century.

Next if we take the educational facilities, it is all government institutions and there is not a single instance of Kadu Kurubas floating their own institutions at any level. Kurubas, on the contrary have a large number of educational institutions, all over the four districts covered in the study. In both H.D.Kote and Hunsur Taluks nursery schools and ashram schools function mostly with the backing of NGO's. The children from 226 households in H.D.Kote and 211 in Hunsur Taluk have a nursery School within a Kilometer (km) radius, while children from 43 households have to trek a distance of 2 to 5 KM to attend the nursery classes and 31 households do not have the facility at all in H.D.Kote area. In Hunsur we have 211 households whose children can attend nursery school within a Km and another 58 households children have to cover 2-5 Km to reach a nursery school while 32 do not have this facility.

Similarly 95 households children have ashram school within one kilometer in H.D.Kote area and children of 83 households do not

have ashram schools at all, while the remaining children from 122 households do have ashram schools within a radius of 2-5 Km and children do enroll. In Hunsur taluk, the NGO 'DEED' is concentrating on tribal education, so that maximum number of children are found in ashram schools. Children from 139 households have access to ashram schools within a kilometer from their respective Hadis, while the remaining reach ashram schools ranging from 2 to 5 Km radius.

For primary and middle school education in H.D.Kote area, 208 and 48 households are located within a kilometer distance from school, so that children could walk the distance. Forty four households and 236 households are located at a distance varying from 2-5 and beyond 5 km for school going children. Children drawn from another 63 households have no school facility of the above kind. As we go to high school and college level, the number reduces drastically. There is one each for high school and college who stays within a kilometer while 16 for high school and 27 for college do not have this facility. The remaining numbers can be found in Hadi households located in a range of 2-5 and beyond high school and for college overwhelming numbers above 5 km distance. In Hunsur area 3 for high school 12 for college stay within a kilometer. A negligible number 12 for school and 8 for college stay between 2-5 km distance. The remaining numbers are to be found beyond 5 km distance from school-college, which they cover on foot. Though enrollment of students in ashram, nursery, primary and middle school is satisfactory, because there is residential facility, scholarship and free studentship, clothing -- uniform – books and many other items which the social welfare department provides for the ST students. As we move up to high school and college, the number gets thinner. There are only a few matriculates and hardly some half a dozen general degree holders.

It might be pointed out here that ST reservation seats have been availed by Parivara caste students for over a number of years in all professional and technical courses of study. Medical and Engineering colleges in Mysore had on their rolls during the year 1987-

88 when a research study* of the SCs and STs was undertaken. It was found that students belonging to Parivara caste had no difficulty in passing off and thus claiming all reservation seats in medicine and engineering courses. Given this trend, it would be difficult even to think positively that some day there will be a qualified doctor or engineer drawn from Kadu Kuruba Tribe. This contrasts very well with Kurubas who have certainly made strides in education and there are qualified doctors, lawyers and engineers apart from a number of general graduates as well as officers.

The government should show political will for the development of Kadu Kurubas in education and allied fields. Any move to merge the two groups because of common nomenclature would prove detrimental to the development and progress of Kadu Kurubas. An objective assessment of the condition of these people should be obtained from NGOs working among them. In recent years, it is the NGOs who are striving for development of these people, while government policies and programmes remain on paper, and officers connected with welfare and development have proved themselves not efficient or apathetic as pointed out by Nanjunda Rao.

In the next chapter Marriage, family as part of the social structure among the Kurubas and Kadu Kurubas will be discussed. If some significant differences obtained these will be highlighted as a point of departure between caste and tribe, despite tribes are increasingly exposed to the influences exerted by Hinduism and caste system though frequent contact has certainly made some inroads in tribal setting. Still the tribals have managed to retain many of their original customs and practices. Hierarchy of super-ordination and subordination has not emerged. Observance of ritual purity and pollution is there, but this has not marginalised the status of tribal women. Even though they practice patrilineal reckoning, women do enjoy more freedom than their counter-part, Hindu sisters. All this will be discussed in chapter VI.

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* Shivanna K.T (1990) Unpublished Ph.D., Thesis submitted to Mysore University.

CHAPTER -- VI

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY AMONG THE KURUBAS AND KADU KURUBAS

The institutions of marriage and family are nearly universal in all known human societies all over the world and from such times as we could trace the history of mankind including perhaps prehistoric times. These two social institutions have surpassed mere biological and thus instinctive purposes to become more enduring to attract a distinctive human touch.

Both these institutions have thrown up a variety of forms and transformations have occurred from time to time. Marriage not only serves a biological purpose, but it endorses stable relationships amongst a number of people. It seldom ends with man-woman as husband-wife relationships. A variety of roles, rights, duties, responsibilities are involved. This naturally promotes a network of activities that bind people together. There cannot be a family without marriage and vice-versa is so much in evidence in the history of human existence on this earth.

The credit of having collected lot of information on marriage and family naturally belongs to Anthropologists. In the beginning it may be as curious travellers, adventurers, some of them with smattering knowledge about other societies collected information - often detailed information on life styles and social relationships of different people in a given society. As anthropology developed as an academic subject in the universities of England, America and Europe, scholars trained in Anthropology set out to new countries, other than their own to learn and throw light on people and institutions. British University - Oxford, Cambridge, London -- trained Anthropologists ventured to study colonial subjects which would be helpful to the imperial rulers in governing the colonies. The few expeditions lead by Seligman and W.H.R. Rivers to India, Ceylon (Srilanka) Torre

Straits are cases in point. Africa, Australia and innumerable tribal groups, aborigines, primitive, preliterate – indeed provided excellent opportunity to study different human societies.

It was not until 1914-18, during world war when Malinowski was trapped – somewhat inadvertently while he landed in Australia to study polynesian (Melanesia) tribe, the war broke out and it was impossible for Malinowski to return to England. This forced stay did lay the foundation for more systematic study. Fieldwork and data collection on systematic basis thus emerged from this time. Living among/with the people one wants to study, observing various events that occur in the society during the period of fieldwork, interviewing and eliciting information from the people on various topics which will be finally analysed. This tradition continues and several innovations are added to make more sophisticated studies.

Side by side with Anthropologists, Sociologists also embarked upon the study of society and its several institutions both in simple as well as complex societies. In the methods of study both Anthropologists and Sociologists share a good deal in common yet there are significant differences. Fieldwork coupled with participant – observation often emphasizing on qualitative aspects still is central to anthropology, while survey, sample and quantitative studies mark sociological investigations.

Many Indian scholars both Anthropologists and Sociologists besides foreign scholars from England, America and Europe have worked on Indian Society, its social stratification, caste system, marriage, family, kinship, economic organization and so forth. Late K.M. Kapadia, Iravati Karve, I.P. Desai, G.S. Ghurye, M.N. Srinivas, Leela Dube, A.M. Shah, T.N. Madan are few names that stands out with their contributions in this area, while Kathleen Gough, L.Dumont. F.G. Bailey, A.C. Mayer among others from abroad who have worked on kinship, marriage, family, caste and allied subjects. The contributions on the subject are fairly large and these studies do help us understand the interlocking of several other social institutions with marriage, family and kinship.

Anthropologists and sociologists have categorized marriage and family depending upon the structure and functions involved. Accordingly we have monogamy where one man-one woman constitute marriage partners, but on both sides there are number of kinsmen involved. Then there is polygamy, where one man can have more than one wife. This may be due to several reasons. If the first wife has no issues, the man can marry wife's sister in sororal polygyny or for economic reasons also polygamous unions can be entered into. Polyandry is almost the opposite of polygyny. One woman serving as wife to a number of brothers – fraternal polyandry or it can be with men who are not related or for economic reasons. It was in vogue among the Todas of Nilgiris and some other tribal groups in India.

To cut short now that monogamy has government sanction and large it is found to be an universal practice. Polygyny or bigamy is not permitted according to government legislation. Persons holding government jobs are strictly bound by government regulations. Outside this category and in rare cases even government officials can enter into polygynous relationships if no further complications arise. In villages sometimes such unions are visible especially with the propertied sections – land lords. Polyandrous marriages are by now almost extinct even among tribals. There is no longer the same kind of isolation exists in tribal areas. With increasing outside contact and the process of modernization, even tribals tend to embrace monogamy, with divorce, remarriage, widows and widowers also can avail this practice without any stigma.

About the institution of family also we have variety. The simple or nuclear family with husband – wife and unmarried children is perhaps the most common and widespread form. Then we have the joint family with a number of married sons living with their parents or just 3-4 married brothers living under one roof, sharing food from common hearth. There are a number of combinations and permutations in the compound or extended families. Widowed – widower, parent for instance can choose to live with married/son/s

and now-a-days often with married daughters also. Sometimes close or distant relatives, elderly people can also live with married persons.

On the whole it can be said that nuclear families are preponderant among urban and rural poor. Members of the family generally work to earn their livelihood and run the family. Joint family at one time was the most favoured in India. Caste system, joint family and Indian village – ran in a trio, helping and sustaining one another. Agricultural economy in particular large land holdings encouraged joint family to continue. It had its advantages, though there were many disadvantages too. Today joint family has not completely withered away. But its structure has undergone change so also its functions. It is no longer 4-5 generations living under the same roof. What marks the existence of joint family are the degrees of jointness as highlighted by I.P. Desai. It is also interesting that some business and industrial families are exhibiting jointness. Business and industries may be owned in common, though families might be living in nuclear units. Wealth and property have promoted ideas of joint living, so that living expenses could be cut down and earnings may be added to the corporate wealth. In nuclear family, it is largely maintenance with little or no property and wealth to fall back upon. Sons/brothers upon marriage go in different directions rather than living in common.

With the above general introduction to marriage and family, let us turn to specific cases of Kurubas and Kadu Kurubas briefly. Broadly speaking these two social institutions play very vital roles both in caste as well as Tribal societies. It is likely there are a number of similarities. But it is equally important to notice, if there are some structural as well as functional differences both in marriage and family.

One important point involved in marriage would revolve around the method/s of recruiting bride/s and groom/s. marriage should take place essentially within the caste but outside gotra (Bedagu, Clan). Endogamy with reference to caste and Bedagu exogamy are thus the rule. Since members belonging to the same gotra or bedagu trace their ancestry to a common source they are all classed as brothers

and sisters and hence marriage is taboo. But caste is the outer boundary and people have to observe caste norms. Hence normally as well as ideally all marriages will take place within the caste. Choice of mates seldom rests with marriage partners. It is usually the elders on both sides who take initiative and negotiate. Hence marriage in caste structure are effectively 'arranged ones' and it is seldom a choice exercised by the spouses. It is in this sense a marriage leads to the establishment of a large network of kinsmen and so it is effectively families that are involved rather than individuals.

In tribal society by and large individual choice of mate is in vogue. Family elders and Tribal elders (Yajamans) figure to finally stamp approval. Here kinship circle need not necessarily indulge in enlarging the obligations. It remains at minimal level while tribal endogamy and clan exogamy are also found to operate. Though of late because of the impact of values of caste society 'arranged marriages' are emerging in tribal society also. But the traditional type, 'marriage by elopement' is still favoured and it does not carry any stigma either. Girls and Boys of marriageable age pair themselves and run away for a few days and fend for themselves in the forest. When they return to the tribal settlement the tribal elders and parents of the boy and girl, host a dinner party and in a very simple ceremony they become husband and wife at minimal cost. The newly wed couple setup an independent family while parents on both sides may occasionally visit them. There is not any heavy obligation on either side, so as to involve formal visits, gifts and entertainment.

In a nutshell the differences connected with marriage, family, kinship system in caste society and the system operating in tribal society may be striking and earmark the one from the other with or without significant overlap. In the case of Kurubas which is a caste group, we come across elaborate customs, traditions and rituals connected with wedding which could be termed as one of the rites of passage. The marriage ceremony could last for 1-3 days while it was a week long celebration in earlier days. Different service castes are involved

in ceremonial roles. A priest is necessary to solemnize the wedding. He could be a Brahmin, Jangam or Kuruba guru drawn from Odeyar sub-caste. Since Kurubas are Saivite and worship 'Beera Devaru' one of the forms of Shiva. Jangams – the priestly caste of the Verasaivas/Lingayats are found to officiate on all ritual occasions among non-Lingayats, quite often even among the former untouchables. This is specially true of Northern districts of the State where Veerasaivas are preponderant. Dharwad, Chitradurga and Bellary districts provide evidence for this. Also the notions of ritual purity and pollution are considerably narrowed down in Veersaivism since 12th century, when the faith spread phenomenally under the impact of the teachings of Basava and his followers. Kurubas are non-vegetarians while Jangam priest can fitin under all circumstances – birth, marriage, death – when some rituals are observed. With a Brahmin priest, it would be somewhat different. Elaborate rules of purity – pollution naturally put good deal of restrictions. In Mysore district this kind of situation should prevail as many non-Brahmins even Okkaligas have the tradition of availing the services of the Brahmin priest. The priestly Kuruba Odeyar sub-caste is not found in many villages. In Mysore district we stumbled upon Odeyar subcaste only at one place. Given this empirical reality, the kurubas by and large depend upon the ritual services of a Brahmin priest. Even Jangam priests are not easily available.

In addition to the priest who officiates, there are a number of others who are ritually involved in weddings. The Barber, Carpenter, Potter, Washerman and village former untouchable castes do have specific roles to play. A wedding is thus as much an occasion to renew family-caste solidarity as amongst different servicing castes who have to discharge ritual obligations which is acknowledged by payment of gifts in kind. Tribal weddings on the contrary are marked by almost total absence of these elaborate rituals and ritual interdependence involving patron-client relationship indicating superodination and subordination.

Out of the 601 Kuruba sample households, there are only 3 nuclear families, widows, widowers and those who have separated/ divorced constitute a negligible number. Majority of households with 2,3,4 married couple living together are preponderant. In Mysore district they constitute, 121, Bellary 108, Dharwad 120, Chitradurga 122 numbers. Even the remaining ones are joint families. In summary it could be said that Joint family living is a preferred one and this will become more clear a little later. Likewise the number of unmarried are in large size in the first four categories. Preponderance of married couple in the sample suggests that marriage is preferred, while married people tend to live in joint families operating in a larger kin group. Agriculture as an important household activity, thus seems to have influenced the structure of the family. It may be recalled that about 40% of the Kuruba households own agricultural land; dry, wet and garden. Agricultural operations do require men and women in greater number to work, supervise cultivation. This is best carried out in joint family rather than nuclear family. About 57 households own pumpsets and 37 own tractors. All this suggests that there is emphasis on agriculture and connected activities and hence the preponderance of joint families.

The preference for joint family among the Kurubas voiced in terms of economic maintenance of the household, unity and that it is beneficial to agricultural operations. Nearly 46% of the sample is positive. While 33% have no opinion, the remainder scattered in other categories like, sheep rearing, political and leadership roles, as well as religious authority are in favour of joint family, yet in the same breath about 67% of the sample have admitted that conflict and misunderstanding are part and parcel of joint living. Barring another 19% who have no opinion, the remaining one's are distributed in categories covering education, Government jobs, urban living and modernization. Joint family acts as a fetter and do not easily facilitate education and modernization. These by their very nature encourage individualism, hence the desire to break away from tradition. But the

empirical reality, pertinent to village life, with land owning households is in favour of joint family, yet to the question do you live in joint family, a total of 140 out of 601 sample households have answered yes. The remaining 461 say that they do not live in joint family. This only suggests the aspirations 'how I wish I were member of joint family' for the advantages that are likely to accrue from it.

It may be recalled that an overhelming majority of informants are in favour of caste endogamy. Four hundred ninety five out of 601 are in favour of marriage within the caste, while another 58 do not mind marriage relationships between different Kuruba sub-castes. These are essentially "arranged marriages" with dowry and other traditional customs and practices. This suggests that there are hardly any intercaste marriages.

The rising caste consciousness and emergent caste organisations are at the root of such chauvinism. Even where some intercaste marriages might have taken place rather sparingly in urban areas, patrilineal descent prompts sticking to male dominance at least in theory. Mixed marriage if any particularly involving upper caste girls may not be declared for record though in private talks in could be a subject matter for boasting. When the girl belongs to lower caste usually information may be withheld till such time when children of such unions start seeking admission in higher educational institutions, particularly in professional courses like engineering and medicine. At such junctures mother's caste status is invoked to claim reservation benefits. Since such cases are few and far between, unless they are publicised, it is difficult to trace.

The Kurubas are well organized, politically conscious caste group. It may become a positive factor in their attempt to climb down the hierarchy to get what they want, that is, the tribal tag. While we get instances of climbing up the caste-hierarchy through the process of sanskritization, in the case of the Kurubas, perhaps, it amounts to keeping open multiple options to achieve the desired goal, like what

the Nadars of Tamilnadu did during the 19th century to fight against discrimination and low caste status. But the Kurubas seem to be inclined to fight for constitutional benefits instead as they do not belong to low caste and are not discriminated either. Infact Kurubas themselves have indicated how several sudra castes rank lower to them.

Now let us turn to consider family and marriage pattern among the Kadu Kurubas. Unlike the Kurubas, among the Kadu Kurubas we find near absence of joint family. There are altogether 594 nuclear families; 149, in Antharasanthe area, 149 in N.Begur and 296 in Hunsur taluk, (DEED)Hunsur area. One joint family each for Antharasanthe, N.Begur, 3 for Hunsur area and the remaining one displaying some degree of jointness in Hunsur area, a total of 7 families have returned as joint. Even here perhaps it is a stop gap measure as there is not the same degree of agricultural activities and land ownership to bind the families to live together.

It has already been pointed out earlier that in H.D.Kote area 138 families own 434 acres of dry land and if at all they cultivate it themselves, it is an average of 3 acres per household. All the land held by the tribals is government allotted land, after bringing the tribals outside their forest dwellings. In Hunsur area it is less than 3 acres per household. The quantum of wet land is roughly one acre and few cents per household in H.D.Kote area, a total of 149 households owning 169 acres, while in Hunsur area it is negligible, only 52 acres available but it is cultivated by 26 families. Though it works out two acres on an average per household, the actual beneficiaries are negligible if we take the total number.

Given the above, it is clear that joint family cannot exist and sustain itself against such poor economic conditions, particularly ownership of agricultural land. Since all the land is government grant, it cannot be assumed to be either fertile or there will be good returns from cultivation, so that the family can sustain itself through a major

part of the year. Tribals generally take to supplement their family income by working for public works department (P.W.D.) also they hire out as agricultural wage labourers in nearby villages. Quite often they migrate seasonally to work in coffee estates in nearby Coorg district. Even when they devote to cultivation of own land there is no guarantee that they can reap the produce, for wild animals, boars, elephants are a threat, which often destroy the standing crops. For all these reasons it appears only nuclear family can constitute a viable unit and not joint family.

The marriage pattern among the Kadu Kurubas appears to present a picture which is almost a departure from caste society. Particularly in South India marriage within the kin group is preferred practice. Many writers – Anthropologists and Sociologists have highlighted it. Dumont and Gough for instance have demonstrated this for some Tamil groups. Similar practices obtain in Andhra and Karnataka as well. But this is almost negligible among the Kadu Kurubas. Monogamous marriage is popular, but polygyny also obtains. Widow/widower remarriage is in vogue and it does not necessarily carry any stigma. Divorce is also allowed and is a much simpler process.

A combination of all the above type of marriages are found among Kadu Kurubas. Among Betta Kurubas, in Antharasanthe area it is 19 (3.1%) in N.Begur area (H.D.Kote), 99 (16.47%) and Hunsur area it is 06 (0.99%). For Jenu Kurubas in the same order we have 131, (21.79%) in Antharsanthe, 51, (8.48%) in N.Begur (H.D.Kote) and 295 (49.08%) in Hunsur area. The marriage pattern among the Betta Kurubas and Jenu Kurubas are substantially the same. Yet the two sub-divisions seldom intermarry. To the question 'Do you approve inter-tribal marriage' the responses are quite revealing. For a vast majority it is an emphatic 'No' only a negligible number in each area have responded positively.

A total of 21 respondents, 1 each from Antharasanthe and Hunsur 19 from N.Begur say 'yes' for inter - tribe marriage. Among

the Jenu Kurubas for the same area a total of 50 respondents are positive, 44 respondents from Hunsur and 06 from H.D.Kote (Antharsanthe). This leaves an overwhelming majority who are not in favour of inter-tribal unions. Among the Betta Kurubas, it is 18, 80 and 05 for Antharsanthe, N.Begur (H.D.Kote) and Hunsur area. The Jenu Kuruba responses in the same order consists of 125, 51 and 250 who are not in favour of such 'mixed' marriages.

There is thus a close parallel between caste and tribal responses. They generally approve endogamous unions, while marriage outside one's caste or tribal subdivisions is shunned. But it is the difference in the pattern of marriage which marks off caste and tribal groups. There is almost no preference to marriage within the kin group. Along with monogamy, polygyny and widow/widower remarriage are in practice among Kadu Kurubas. Monogamy and widower getting married again is commonly found in caste society. Polygyny and widow remarriage are somewhat rare. What with increasing dowry it is unlikely that widow would stand a chance in a world of arranged marriages. While very few would be willing partners to polygynous unions.

Among the Kadu Kurubas divorce is not very difficult to obtain. The sanctity of marriage as a sacred institution does not obtain with tribals as it does in Hinduism and caste system. Nor do we come across arranged marriages as a near universal practice among Kadu Kurubas as found among Kurubas. The selection of spouses among the tribals lies with partners, with a unique practice of the pair eloping into the forest area before the marriage, which is later approved by the parents and tribal elders upon the return of the pair to Hadis. Marriage by elopement is nearly totally absent among the kurubas and caste society in general. In rare cases of 'love marriages' we might trace some resemblance when parents are averse to such unions.

To the question on divorce and remarriage, the tribal response are quite interesting. While a total of 79 Betta Kurubas drawn from

H.D.Kote and Hunsur area have said yes, it is just 39 who say 'no'. This suggests that the incidence of divorce is rather common and so also remarriage of the divorcees. There is no stigma and marriage is not necessarily looked upon as a sacred bond. Among the Jenu Kurubas of the same area, a total of 368 respondents have stated that divorce and remarriage is frequently resorted to. While only 112 deny it. For Antharasanthe it is 287, followed by 30 in N.Begur and 48 in Hunsur, who are positive while it is 86, 21 and 5 in that order who stated negatively. This suggests the amount of individual freedom the spouses enjoy and ability to take decisions about matters that concern their lives with least interference from tribal elders, parents and kinsmen. This contrasts favourably with caste society.

In caste society the spouse seldom enjoy the kind and amount of choice and freedom in comparison with their tribal counterparts. A marriage involves families and a circle of kinsmen. So a divorce is not that easy. A series of patch-up attempts and compromises precede actual separation/divorce. It is only a last resort when all the attempts to compromise the pair fails.

Likewise when questions were put to Kadu Kurubas "whether they consider marriage by elopement good? A fairly good number have responded positively though a preponderant number say 'no'. Among Betta Kurubas a total of 46 drawn from H.D.Kote and Hunsur have said 'yes'. While 77 have stated 'no'. among the Jenu Kurubas, a total of 173 respondents from H.D.Kote and Hunsur have stated positively while a staggering 304 have said 'no'.

The Kadu Kurubas are no longer a forest tribe. They are brought out of forest and settled on the fringe and often in plains. Now there is an increasing interaction between the tribals and non-tribal neighbours from nearby villages. Exchange of views, values, customs, traditions and practices is quite common under such conditions. The Hindu majority wedded as it is to 'arranged marriage' might as well ridicule and rebuke tribal morals involved in marriage

by elopement. Gradually tribals are veering round to caste practices as this is presented as a much superior group in contrast to tribals.

Marriage and family, the two major social institutions as they are operating among the Kurubas and Kadu Kurubas; Caste and tribe do show some significant differences although there are some similarities. The divergences indicate that caste – tribe variations cannot be wiped out easily however, much one wishes to pass off for the other. Land holding, general economic status, joint family structure, arranged marriages, kinship bonds, lack of freedom for spouses even to separate and divorce, marriage, a sacred institution are all part and parcel of caste society.

Both Kurubas and Kadu Kurubas are patrilineal but the status of women among the Kadu Kurubas is much superior in contrast to their caste – Hindu Kuruba sisters. This is reflected in the kind and amount of freedom the tribal women enjoy. Freedom to select their marriage partners, divorce, remarriage of divorcees as well as widows, point to some significant departures. Joint family and kinship circle are nearly dysfunctional if not totally absent among the tribals. Land ownership and economic status suggest that they constitute a marginalized group. Displacement from original habitat is a potent factor in forcing them to imbibe new values. Thus it may lead to adopting more and more of caste characteristics. It is just the beginning of the process.

CHAPTER - VII

POLITICO – RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATION

In this chapter an attempt is made to analyse the political activities and organization of the Kurubas as well as Kadu Kurubas. Also we will try to understand the emergence of a statewide religious organization with a jagadguru drawn from among the Kurubas. The religious centre, a mutt has emerged at state level. Though politics and religion should be ideally independent of one another, in actual practice they have criss-crossed one another all over the world for several centuries.

In the Indian context the nexus between politics, religion and caste are re-emerging with a stronger and perhaps more enduring bonds, particularly after India attained independence. In pre-independence period the scenario was somewhat less grim, but for the Hindu-muslim differences, which is often attributed to the 'divide and rule' policy of the British imperial rulers. Now every other political party purportedly professes 'secularism' in theory but in practice community – caste considerations are rampant. Castes and sub-castes are organizing at different levels to culminate with the title "All India....Mahasabha". even subtle religious differences are emphasized so that fundamentalism and fanaticism seem to have taken roots.

No specific political party or ideology alone is responsible for this. All the major and minor national and regional political organizations have contributed over the decades by making emotional appeals to people to get voted to secure power. Also parties in power have made endless efforts to promote populist schemes to lure people while parties aspiring to acquire power have also adopted similar strategies. Unity, integrity of the country is often given lip service while forces always keep busy dividing the people. In the vast sub-continent, there is not a single state, where people are not split on caste/communal and religious basis, while most of them may be facing

similar problems, on shelter, food, education and grinding poverty. These problems are usually articulated as specific issues pertaining to particular caste, community or religion and not as general issues affecting a vast segment of Indian society. There is nothing strange or peculiar if Kurubas and Kadu Kurubas have organized themselves to achieve bargaining position with powers that be.

Before embarking upon an analysis of the politico-religious organization among the groups under consideration let us pause for a while to look at ideological moorings of some of the important socio-political and economic thinkers of 19-20th century, whose writings and views have influenced the world order tremendously till recently and continue to be invoked time and again. Karl Marx, Max Weber and nearer home Gandhi and Ambedkar seem to share a lot more in common on some points while they do differ in some other important ways.

Karl Marx, a German Jew, the industrial revolution in England and elsewhere in the West provided the main plank for the economic analysis. He makes only passing remarks to religion and quickly dismisses it as an opiate to the masses. His major concern was about the relationship between the bourgeois and proletariat in capitalistic industrial society. Marx knew very little about Asiatic society. He has not analysed the ills of agricultural economy and predominantly peasant society. Karl Marx was more committed to the doctrinaire of the exploitation of the expropriated classes, the working class – in industrial societies. Hence he devoted all his time and energy to study, write and evolve the communist ideology which runs parallel to capitalism.

In the hey-day, Marxism spread like wildfire in different parts of the world both industrial and predominantly agricultural societies. Variations did occur in communist ideology in different societies, until at last it is discorded in East European counties and societies. While Cuba, China still profess communist ideology, but capitalistic inroads

are visible in China while industrialization and market economy are catching up. India too has communists drawing inspiration from the ideology of Marx-Lenin-Mao, U.S.S.R. and China. The Indian social structure itself has a debilitating effect on communist ideology. It can only linger on in pockets taking the extremist form of 'Naxalites' and Peoples War Group. It is neither an economic force and much less a political force.

Max Weber another thinker of the late nineteenth century wielded influence in the intellectual, and academic circles by his astute analysis of power, structure and role of bureaucracy, economic analysis, above all by demonstrating the positive role of religion in encouraging economic activities. While Marx dismissed religion as an opiate, Weber analyses the role of religion in the growth of 'modern capitalism' in the West. The religious teachings of different protestant sects are analysed to highlight how 'Calvinism', did promote modern capitalism. His analysis of 'power' structure especially charismatic leadership is often invoked by many as an important attribute of a successful political leader. Weber's thoughts are yet to take the ideological stance.

Gandhi and Ambedkar were contemporaries, but reacted quite differently to contemporary and other social problems of Twentieth century India. It is possible to read the fusion of politics and religion in Gandhian thought as well as action. But Ambedkar did not align himself with the mainstream politics which was concentrated on attaining independence from British imperial rule. Gandhi and congress occupied the centre stage in freedom struggle. Many of the techniques evolved by Gandhi like Satyagraha, Ahimsa, Swadeshi movement were geared to thwart the imperial rulers. These techniques are still in vogue not only in India but in other parts of the world as well. In this sense Gandhism is very much a live ideology. Whether it can become a force, only future can tell in the fast changing global scenario.

Ambedkarism to-day is emerging as almost a parallel ideology to Gandhism. The social base of these two great sons of India are

very different. Though both are Western educated. Gandhi reconciled a lot with Indian Hindu traditions. But Ambedkar almost rebelled against the traditions which upheld chaturvarna, caste system with its graded hierarchy and the practice of untouchability. In 1930s itself Ambedkar declared that though he was born a Hindu but untouchable he would never die as a Hindu. His critique of Hinduism, however, did not make him irreligious or discord religion as 'opiate' as Marx did. On the contrary it set him search for an alternative to Hinduism. He hit upon Buddhism as most rational, compassionate religious ideology and advocated that untouchables were former Buddhists and so they should embrace Buddhism and absolve themselves from the ignomy of untouchability heaped on them by Hinduism.

By concentrating on the deprivations faced by one section of Indian population and making it an important issue in the 'Round Table' dialogue with the British, Ambedkar emphasized the negative role of Hinduism and so he wanted that untouchables should be treated as a separate non-Hindu category. Social democracy should endorse political democracy and he believed that such a thing cannot happen in Hinduism. He embraced Buddhism at the fag end of his life along with some of his followers. As of now Buddhism is neither a social nor a political force. It is lingering on as there are some converts from former untouchable castes.

Ambedkar – a trained Anthropologist-cum-Sociologist, qualified at bar in fact is one of the intellectual luminaries to have sprang from an untouchable caste of Maharashtra. Whatever might be the differences in approach to social problems of India between Gandhi and Ambedkar, the services of Ambedkar to the nation as Chairman of the constitution drafting committee and later as Union Law Minister in Jawaharlal Nehru's cabinet are memorable. He quit the ministry when the Hindu code bill, which he had brought forward to protect and assure the rights and status of Hindu women, was defeated in the parliament.

Perhaps the more enduring contributions are the provisions of reservation policy for SCs and STs in the constitution. Ambedkar probably did not visualise it as something permanent. It was stop-gap-measure which should be evaluated from time to time. Initially a ten year period was set to assess the impact of reservation, in education, government jobs, political representation through reservation of seats in state assemblies and parliament and general economic amelioration.

Ambedkarism is now the razing ideology. It is no longer the SCs and STs alone who can claim the reservation benefits. With few exceptions every caste, sub-caste, religious groups want a slice in 'reservation cake'. The only hurdle seems to be the supreme court directions that reservation should not exceed 50 percent while infact Karnataka and Tamilnadu have exceeded this limit for some groups in a variety of ways. Ambedkar and Marx are comparable in so for as they both championed the cause of the exploited groups. While Marx did not hit upon 'protective discrimination' as a policy to help the expropriated working class in industrial society, Ambedkar provided sops in a mixed economy for the hitherto deprived groups in Indian society.

Now the country is poised to extend the benefits of reservation as a political patronage. Reservation benefits that go with groups being included in the schedule have almost come to stay. There is no reason or rhyme except the demands put forth by a group. Pressure group politics ultimately succeeds. Various state governments have come up with demands of including different groups in the schedule and consider for other reservation benefits. The parliament at the centre endorses, the President of India, 'gives his assent'. Like this all over the country many new groups have managed to get reservation benefits.

In addition to the SC/ST category we have what is popularly known as Mandal Commission at all India level and state level Backward Classes Commissions which have gone on listing caste

groups drawn mostly from sudra category as Backward Classes (BCs) other Backward Classes(OBCs) socially and educationally backward (SEBCs) and a number of other categories which qualify for different kinds of reservations. But the most disturbing factor surrounds the SC/ST category. Many non-SCs and non-STs have strived successfully either pass-off or get their groups included in the schedule. It is already pointed out earlier how the Waddas – also known as Bhovis – and the Lambanis both have been included in the SC category, though they never faced the problems of untouchability. Likewise groups are now trying to make inroads into ST category. The Naiks, Talawara, Beda, Valmiki synonyms – have got the tribal tag. The Parivara and Raja Parivara which equates itself with the above category is now striving to get a share in ST reservation. But the sad part of the story is in all professional courses of study, medicine, engineering – in Mysore district a research study carried out in 1980s has thrown light that it is the Parivara caste group that has cornered the seats and no tribals in the district have stepped in. Now the Kurubas are adopting similar mechanisms and claim that Kadu Kurubas (Tribal) and Kurubas (caste) are identical. They are organizing themselves as a pressure group to press their claims. If both Parivara and Kuruba caste groups succeed in their attempts to get included in ST category or the distinction gets blurred and the groups are delcared as synonymous, that should spell the doom on tribal groups. They perhaps will never be able to recover from it.

Ambedkar today has become the prophet of 'reservation miracle', which every other caste groups seeks and worships. Many 'minor prophets' have propped up reservation as magic wand for the progress of the Backward Classes. It is reservation 'pure' and 'simple' based on caste-tribe basis, although now some more variables are added. Once a group gets into reservation belt, there is no way of unseating them. There is no scheme of de-reservation nor are measures evolved to evaluate the impact of the scheme. The vocal people drawn from the reserved category as well as political leaders

insist on the continuation of the policy. Now it is operating for nearly five decades in the case of SCs and STs, while for BCs one or two decades later. In fact if we consider the Backward classes movement started at the turn of Twentieth century in Madras Presidency, Bombay Presidency and former Mysore state, it preceedes the 'Ambedkar formulae' by several decades. Yet nobody knows who are the beneficiaries and where the policy has lead the nation. If anything casteism, corruption, and favouritism – leading to populism have become endemic.

How long Ambedkarism can ride this high tide? Will it be able to achieve the intended results as conceived by Ambekdar? Has not the scheme lent support to promote unintended consequences? These and similar questions should become issues at some future date. Just as Marxism could not realise the goals predicted by Marx, perhaps 'protective discrimination' in general would retard the emergence of achievement – oriented spirit. Resurgence of primordial loyalties and fissiparous tendencies would turn it into a less peace-loving nation. These unintended forces might affect the country adversely.

Now let us turn to consider the religious aspect of life of the Kurubas. It is already pointed out that Kurubas are Hindus. Customs, beliefs, practices and traditions of Hinduism in general obtains among the Kurubas. Caste system and Hinduism are so much intertwined, it is very difficult to pinpoint where caste system begins and Hinduism ends or vice-versa. By definition all Hindus are born into a caste and profess it in their day-to-day life. Ideally as well as in actual practice Hinduism endorses caste system. Since birth is the hall-mark of caste, Hindu religion like caste system, carries ascriptive attributes and values. Unlike Christianity and Islam, there is no proselylization or conversion to Hinduism.

Like caste membership, religious identity is also based on birth. Thus all Hindus are born Hindus and there is no way of the acquiring it. As there is no strong centralised religious authority in Hinduism,

different caste-groups tend to have their own caste members as religious heads in addition can owe allegiance to upper caste religious men. For instance most non-Brahmins can be followers of Brahmin mutts – religious organization and accept the mutt head as family guru while the non-Brahmin religious organizations and mutt heads are not accepted by the Brahmins. The Lingayats also known as Veerashaivas, a 12th century anti-Brahmin social movement to-day not only have multiple number of religious organizations and religious heads, but has emerged as one of the most politically powerful group, also numerically preponderant. Barring Brahmins many non-Lingayat caste-group also owe allegiance to Veerashaiva mutts in Karnataka.

The religious scenario is thus less well defined. One can be Hindu but there is no compulsion to go to temple or to visit or invite home religious seers. Beside this, innumerable God's and Goddess's of Hindu pantheon do find a place by the side of the family deity. Sickness or misfortune can prompt a person in the household to start making vows to different deities. The fine distinction between worshippers of Shiva or Vishnu doesnot obtain in practice. The reference to holi Trimurthi, Brahma – the creator, Vishnu – the preserver and Maheshwara – the destroyer, obtains all but in theory. Hence when we discuss religious aspects, it is best to describe it as popular Hinduism with a leaning towards pantheism. Majority of Hindus are also ignorant of scriptures, at best they have a smattering knowledge of myths, beliefs and practices. Most of them are dependent on priests who cater to the ritual needs of the people. There is thus patron - client – jajman relationship between priest and households, where the former officiates on auspicious – like wedding –and sometimes on inauspicious occasions – as death rituals. He is paid both in cash and kind for his services. Priests hail from a priestly caste or households, and are available at all levels - village, town, city – while the mutt heads make only ceremonial visits occasionally but collect donations from followers/devotees.

A look at the responses of the Kurubas on the family deity it becomes evident that there is a mix of both Shaivism and Vishnavism. Hundreds of names are returned for family deities from the four districts. Kurubas are Shaivites and a their favourite deity is Beerappa, one of the several names of Shiva. Many variant forms of Shiva under different names are also worshipped. In addition, in each district, several local deity named after some places are worshipped by the respondents. Usually deities located in places of pilgrimage, also figure as family deities, but quite often-female deities – Goddesses – too figure as family deities.

Hanumantha – Maruthi, Lakshmi, Rangaswamy, Thimmappa, Keshava are instances of deities both male and female which clearly belong to Vaishnavism. In all the four districts some respondents have named these deities. Even Brahmadeva is returned as family deity by 20 households in Mysore district. Who can say that Brahma is not worthy of worship by Hindus. When there is evidence from the field data? The popular belief is Brahma as creator, married Saraswathi, his creation, so is daughter, hence his guilty of incest and not worthy of worship. But the data belies this.

Beeradevaru as family deity is worshipped by Kurubas in all the four districts under study. For instance in Mysore district we have 16 households, Dharwad has 33, Bellary 16 and Chitradurga accounts for 63 households. Besides, variant forms of Beerappa, under different names also are worshipped for instance Male Mahadeshwara, Kallesha, Mallappa and so on. It can be said that Kurubas are predominantly Shaivites with a good interspersing of Vaishnavite and several local deities, which have become centres of local or regional cult.

There are also 43, 27, and 25 households, which have returned Mylara linga as family diety from Bellary, Dharwad and Chitradurga districts. Kurubas have a special affinity to Mylara linga deity located at Mylara in Bellary district, which is also one of the regional pilgrimage centres. Kuruba men and women dedicate themselves as Goravas

(ritual service) and otherwise render special service of forecasting (Karnika), the implications for the coming year. For Dharwad district 67 households have stated Soundathi Yellamma as the family deity. This particular Goddess has attained notoriety in recent years since large number of girls and young women are dedicated as Devadasis who take to prostitution. This study however, cannot throw light whether dedication as Devadasis is prevalent among Kurubas. Again Soundathi is a regional pilgrim centre with devotees flocking the cult centre 3-4 times in a year, when dedication of girls as Devadasis is one of the ritual activity.

Yellamma also figure as family deity among Bellary and Chitradurga respondents. In Bellary district 7 households and in Chitradurga 19 households have stated it. In addition Uchchangamma, one of the several names for Goddess Parvathi, named after the place Uchchangi durga in Bellary district has 19 households from Chitradurga district and 9 households from Bellary who state the Goddess as family deity. Girls and young women used to be dedicated as Devadasis to Huchchangamma also at the turn of 20th century. But this has been banned by the government some decades back, when Bellary district was part of Madras Presidency. Now the practice does not obtain or atleast it is no longer a place that attracts, adverse comments. Still some negligible dedication may obtain sparingly but stealthily. The most disturbing information is that 14 households from Chitradurga district have stated Chandraguthemma as family deity. Chandraguthi is located in Shimoga district, and a place of pilgrimage. But it has attained notoriety for 'nude worship' by the devotees. Men and women who throng to the annual festival, after a ritual bath walk with little or no clothes on to the temple. Social activists drawn from Dalit Sangarsha Samithi and others have successfully campaigned against the practice of 'nude worship'. Now the government has banned the annual festival. A posse of police camp in the area during the festival time although some vested interests are involved in encouraging the practice.

From the above facts it can be deduced that Kurubas are just too far removed from the process of sanskritization. Like many caste groups which constitute sudra varna, and form a hierarchy, often disputing for higher status, with increasing politicisation, education and organized efforts, Kurubas do claim higher status and state that so many other caste-groups among sudras rank below them. However, it becomes clear that the ritual status of the Kurubas is also not very high. A few names of family deities to use Srinivas' description bear sanskritic version. For instance Yellamma in returned as Renuka by some respondents. Similarly Maruthi for Anjaneya is mentioned. With the establishment of a Mutt at Kaginele in Dharwad district and installation of a Jagadguru from among the Kurubas in recent years the stage is perhaps set for greater consolidation of the Kurubas, with the spread of formal education, acquisition of wealth, property and above all the political clout. They are preparing to muster, it is possible, they will also tend to sanskritise in addition to other avenues open to them. For several decades Kuruba community has thrown up political leaders to state assembly and parliament with some occupying ministerial positions.

From family deity to caste/family Guru makes a nice transition. Majority of respondents in all the four districts have stated that they do not know. It is 81 households in Mysore district followed by 80, Dharwad, 70, Bellary and 62 Chitradurga. A total of 302 households out of 601 have no idea about caste/family guru. This suggests that 50% of our sample are still quite backward and not able to articulate the latest efforts of establishing a religious organization and installing a Swamiji-Guru–at Kaginele, so that in some future date the religious organization can occupy centre stage in bringing the Kurubas all over Karnataka together and thus voice the opinion of the caste-group on issues considered relevant to their advancement.

The rest of the respondents have named various persons as caste/family guru. Among them two names seem to be more significant

from the point of view of using the position for the statewide unification of the Kurubas. However, the two persons as of now are not necessarily rivals. Hence there could be no split. Channaiah Odeyar who hails from Chitradurga district, belongs to Odeyar sub-caste, which is the traditional priestly group. Till recently he was also a member of parliament from congress party. His area of operation is limited to Bellary and Chitradurga districts. Eight households in Bellary and 48 respondents from Chitradurga district have stated Channaiah Odeyar as their guru. There does not seem to be any contradiction between the traditional role of religious guru and modern political leader in a democratic set up – being a member of parliament. Who can claim politics and religion are independent? They seem to criss-cross more often than it is assumed at national level.

Swami Beerendra Keshava has been returned as caste/family guru by 24 households in Mysore district, 15 in Dharwad district and 7 in Chitradurga district. Shri Beerendra Keshava Tarakananda was installed as 'Jagadguru' (world spiritual leader) on 9.2.1992 to head 'Kanaka Peetha' at Kaginele in Haveri Taluk of Dharwad district. He hails from Nanjangud town, a saivite religious centre and place of pilgrimage in Mysore district, twenty-five Kms. from Mysore city. Earlier he was known by the name Puttaveera taraka. He had his college education in Mysore and has an M.A., in political science from Mysore University. However, he was not inclined to take up a job nor did he get married but was engrossed in reading Vivekananda, Aravinda and other spiritual writings. For a while he devoted himself to render social service and organizing the people. He even contested State Assembly election but got disappointed by the results.

The Kuruba community was in search of a person who could give a religious lead by accepting to become 'Dharma Guru'. They found in him the right person and persuaded. Finally he accepted the invitation, left home for Kaginele in June 1990. From there he goes on to various religious centres in Northern India, spent a couple of

years learning Sanskrit and reading the sacred literature. His desire to take to Sanyasa was not supported by the Swamiji of Shivanandashrama at Rishikesh, because he was a born Sudra, hence he has to face this humiliation. But Muktananda Swami of Yogi Niketan Ashram obliges and confers Sanyasa diksha to Beerendra. After sometime he returned to Karnataka and further apprenticed himself to Tiruchi Mahaswami at Kailash Ashrama near Bangalore. With all these preparatory stages over he became the first Kuruba Jagadguru on 9th Feb. 1992 at Kaginele Kanaka Guru Peetha under the new name Shri Beerendra Keshava Tarakananda Mahaswami[1].

The stage is thus set to bring about the unification of Kurubas under a religious head. Till 1992 there was no centralised religious authority and organization among the Kurubas. With ceaseless efforts by the community leaders, a dream has come true. For in the existing political democracy Kuruba leaders are distributed among several political parties at all levels. Political ambition possibly cannot bring different Kuruba leaders under one umbrella. It is at best a divisive force. Whereas, different leaders assembling under a religious authority can work unitedly and thus forge unity of purpose. What the Kuruba political leaders could not muster over decades has thus been made possible. All kinds of political leaders irrespective of party affiliation, social workers, activists, intellectuals, ordinary masses can now gather under the religious leadership to present a unified front to achieve the advancement of the community. Thus politics and religion are a judicious mix and made for each other in contemporary India and are used as such though leaders are never tired of describing themselves as secular forces.

Now we turn to analyse the political role of Kuruba leaders in post-independence India. This will highlight once again utter marginalization of the tribal group, the Kadu Kuruba, while all along the Kurubas have cornered the advantages and held political offices at all levels. But before analysing the political participation, the list of MPs, MLAs, MLCs, and ministers is presented. Between 1989 -

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1. Paramesh in PAVANA commemorative volume pp. 10-14

1994, there were two Loksabha members, eleven assembly members (at state level with two ministers) and two members of Legislative Council. The list is as follows:

(Current) Loksabha Members (1989-94)

Names	*Constituency*	*District*
Channaiah Odeyar	Davangere	Chidradurga
D.K. Naicker	Dharwad	Dharwad (North)

(Current) vidhana sabha Members (1989-94)

H. Vishwanath	Krishnarajapet	Mysore
Dr. Y. Nagappa	Harihar	Chidradurga
E.T. Shambunatha	Hadagali	Bellary
H.M. Revanna	Magadi	Bangalore
H.K. Dasappa	Sira	Tumkur
Hanuma Gowda	Kusthagi	Raicur
K. Bhimanna	Kalmala	Raichur
S.S. Patil	Shirahatti	Dharwad
Hullappa Yamunappa	Guledagudda	Bijapur
K.S. Eshwarappa	Shimoga	Shimoga
K.H. Kurudagi	Mundaragi	Dharwad

(Current) Members of Legislative Counsil (1989-94)

A. Doddegowda
T.N. Narayanaswamy

Names of the Vidhana Sabha, Vidhana Parishat, Loksabha and Rajya Sabha members (Ministers) who have been there multiple number of times.

Names	*District*
Late T. Mariyappa	Mysore
Late R. Nagana Gowda	Bellary
D.K. Naickar	Dharwad
V.L. Patil	Belgaum

Y. Ramachandra	Bangalore
N. Basavaiah	Tumkur
B.B. Chimmana Katti	Bijapur
Siddaramaiah	Mysore
E.T. Shambunatha	Bellary

Vidhana Sabha Members :

1. ***Mandya***

Late T. Mariyappa	Nagamangala - Mysore
Late N. Chigarigowda	Nagamangala

2. ***Mysore***

S.M. Marippa	Periyapattana
Late N. Rachaiah	Nanjangud
Rajugowda	Hanur
M. Basavaraju	K.R. Nagar
H. Vishwanath	K.R. Nagar
Siddaramaiah	Chamundeswari

3. ***Chikmagalur***

T. Nagappa	Tarikere
T.R. Paramashivaiah	Tarikere
Late K.N. Mudiyappa	Kadur
K.M. Thammaiah	Kadur
N.K. Huchappa	Kadur

4. ***Bellary***

Late Dr. R. Nagana Gowda	Hospet
Shankara Gowda	Hospet
E.T. Shambunatha	Hadagali

5. ***Dharwad***

Late T.K. Kambli	Kundagol
D.K. Naickar	Dharwad (Rural)
K.H. Kurudagi	Mundaragi
S.N. Shankaregowda Patil	Sharahatti

6.	***Bangalore***	
	Late Smt. Lakshmidevamma	Chamarajpet : Hoskote, Malur
	Y. Ramachandra	Binnypet : Chikpet
	H.M. Revanna	Magadi
7.	***Shimoga***	
	H.B. Kadasiddappa	Honnali
	K.S. Eshwarappa	Shimoga
8.	***Chitradurga***	
	M. Ramappa	Harihar : Hosadurga
	Late B.T. Rangappa	Hosdurga
	Late P. Venkataramaiah	Hosadurga
	Late M.V. Rudrappa	Hosadurga
	K. Mallappa	Harihar : Mayakonda
	Dr. Y. Nagappa	Harihar
9.	***Tumkur***	
	N. Basavaiah	Chiknayakana Halli
	B. Lakkappa	Chikknayakana Halli
	C.N. Bhaskarappa	Bellavi
	Late S.K. Dasappa	Sira
10.	***Belgaum***	
	V.L. Patil	Raibagh : Kagawad
	Late N.B. Dalvai	Athani : Soundathi
11.	***Bijapur***	
	B.B. Chimmana Katti	Badami
	Hullappa Yamunappa Meti	Guledagudda
12.	**Gulbarga**	
	Mallappa kollur	Yadagir, Surapura

13.	***Raichur***	
	M. Ganganna	Kushtagi
	Hanumagowda Patil	Kushtagi
	Vaarada Shivanna	Kalmala
	K. Bhimanna	Kalmala
	K. Bhimanna	Masti
14.	***Bidar***	
	Manikarao Pulekar	Bidar
15.	***Coorg (Kodagu)***	
	G.K. Subbaiah	Virajpet (Only Kadu Kuruba Member)

Vidhana Parishat embers :

Name	*District*
Late Belawadi Gavisiddappa	Belgaum
Channaiah Odeyar	Chitradurga
Late N.N. Kallannavar	Dharwad
Y. Ramachandra	Bangalore
Late Dr. M.B. Nataraj	Bangalore
Manikrao Pulekar	Bidar
A. Doddegowda	Hassan
T.H. Narayanaswamy	Tumkur

Loksabha Members :

D.K. Naickar	Dharwad (North)
Channaiah Odeyar	Davangere
Rajashekar Kollur	Gulbarga
V.L. Patil	Belgaum (before 1956)

Rajya Sabha Members :

Kollur Mallappa	Gulbarga
M. Basavaraj	Mysore*

No Central Ministers

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* Source : PAVANA : Commemorative Volume Brought out on the occassion of establishment of Kanaka Guru Peetha and Beerendra's Coronation as Jagadguru - 9.2.92 - Appendix 9. 138.

Who can say that Kurubas are politically not powerful or a non - entity? The long list of members is not only impressive but points to the power – sharing they have enjoyed all along in post independence period. If this is the scenario at national and state level, one could guess the regional and local picture where there is concentration of Kurubas. Yet the political offices, power and positions does not seem to have quenched their thirst. They are bent upon claiming 'reservation' benefits in various fields and they do not want backward class tag. All this and more information will emerge from field data to which we shall turn now.

To the question do you or your family members belong to any political party with sub-division, member, office bearer, supporter and sympathiser, a bare 69 (12.5%) out of 601 sample households have responded positively. The remaining 532 (88.5%) households come under the category not applicable.

Likewise to the question whether the respondents participated in the political party meetings, rallies, processions and so forth 136 (22.6%) households out of 601 have said yes, the remaining 465 (77.3%) households have returned as not applicable.

To a further question, political party the members supported 38 (6.3%) households of the sample supported Congress (I), 13 (2.1%) households, supported Janata Dal, Karnataka Congress Party got the support from 9 (1.4%) households, while B.J.P. stood with five households (0.8%) and just one household (0.1%) supported the Communists. As usual 535 (89.0%) households of the sample belong to not applicable category.

Finally to the question, which political party you voted? The responses are as follows. This is with reference to 1994 Assembly Elections, when Janata Dal emerged victorious. But figures of voting pattern among the Kurubas reveal an overwhelming support to Congress (I) party. Two Hundred Fifty Four households (42.2%) votes the Congress (I), while only 96 households (15.95) voted Janata

Dal. The B.J.P. also made substantial advances when 42 (6.9%) Kuruba households voted the party. The Karnataka Congress party got vote from 6 (0.9%) households and Communists from 4 (0.6%) households, while Independents were supported by 8 (1.3%) households. The remaining 191 (31.7%) households belong to not applicable category.

A number of reasons are given as to why the particular party/ candidate was voted by our respondents. Caste identity (feeling), voluntary, in anticipation of facilities, favourite party, by force, candidate is related/friend are some of the important reasons given in addition to several others. Those who voted in anticipation of receiving facilities are as follows: 36, 21, 10, 11 households from Mysore, Dharwad, Bellary and Chitradurga districts, on the basis of caste identity, we have 11, 10, 27, 33 households respectively in Mysore, Dharwad, Bellary and Chitradurga districts. Those who voted voluntarily constitute 22 households in Mysore, 17 in Bellary and 32 in Chitradurga district. Similarly favourite party involves 21 households in Mysore, 8 in Bellary, 8 in Chitradurga. Friend/relatives involves, 3 households in Mysore 4 in Dharwad, 6 in Bellary. A few stated that they were forced to vote a particular party/candidate. They constitute 14 households in Mysore district, 17 in Dharwad, 13 in Bellary and 5 households in Chitradurga district.

Apart from a host of other reasons 'caste identity' and 'force' seem to have coexisted, while the former is likely to intensify, the later might get tapered because of strict vigilance and electoral reforms. As long as there are illiterates among the electorate, the above factors are bound to be there. Only future can throw light if these can be controlled or eliminated.

To the question 'do you know the name of your caste political leaders, an overwhelming majority have answered positively. Barring 130 households out of 601, sample, the rest of them have stated that they do know the present as well as Ex-MLAs, MPs, Ministers and other influential persons.

To another question in what ways the leaders have benefitted the community, slightly more than half the sample have listed the various services rendered by them. A total of 52.4 per cent of respondents have stated among other things how the leaders have strived to organize Kurubas, created political awareness, run educational institutions and hostels, religious institutions are set-up and secured many concessions to the community. It is interesting to note that a total of 59.4 per cent of respondents in all the four districts have stated that they want reservation benefits to the community. The government should extend facilities for education, jobs, and provide such other financial assistance for the benefit of the community like advancing loans, building houses, and giving special privileges. A staggering number, 122 out of 145 in Mysore district do not like to be considered as BCs likewise 129, 93, 90 for Dharwad, Bellary and Chitradurga have rejected the BC tag. Declaring Kurubas as BCs would not benefit the community much, since they will be clubbed with other backward communities. Thus what they derive as benefits will be a small fraction of the quota. Instead if they get reservation facilities that are available as of now to Kadu Kuruba tribals, they are in for maximum benefits perhaps at the cost of the tribals. This becomes clear when we analyse the responses to certain suggestions such as merger of caste and tribe to form All India Kuruba Mahasabha/Sangha.

We may recall how a vast majority of Kurubas 428 (71.2%) out of 601 sample have stated that there is no relationship between Kadu Kurubas and Kurubas proper. Only 131 (21.7%) have stated affirmatively. But this stance get transformed and the responses to the following questions brings out ulterior motives cherished by Kurubas. To the question whether merger of caste and tribe would be more advantageous, total of 47 respondents 39 in Mysore district, 4 in Dharwad, 3 in Bellary and 1 in Chitradurga have stated they do not like merger which also include caste pollution as one of the reasons. A substantial number of respondents, 67, 116, 125, 127, Mysore, Dharwad, Bellary and Chitradurga districts welcome merger as a

measure of unity and support. Another 79 respondents have approved it in terms of identification, economic and political benefits. Totally 514 out of 601, have expressed positively. This is in contrast to the earlier statement that there is no relationship between Kadu Kurubas and Kurubas.

To a further question that merger of caste and tribe to form all India Kuruba Mahasabha, the response is undoubtedly predominantly positive. For there are 526 (87.5%) respondents who say 'yes' while only 48 (7.8%) say 'no'. Whether formation of Mahasabha would amount to a strong pressure group, 572 (95.1%) respondents have stated positively only 10 respondents have denied it. In the light of such 'emotionally charged' responses, when a question about the relevance of caste organization is asked, the respondents, 134, 135, 148, 135 for Mysore, Dharwad, Bellary and Chitradurga districts respectively have stated that caste organization is very relevant, more so to present day politics -- political democracy, where pressure group tactics and number game can play a useful role to win the battle.

Thus it becomes clear that Kurubas wish to include Kadu Kurubas only to swell their number and derive benefits out of number. They do not really wish genuine merger, for that would create problems, and caste pollution would be the end result. They want merger for strengthening their base. By adopting pressure group tactics, they reach a position of bargaining with the government and clinch tribal tag as well as benefits of reservation. But in reality they will have nothing to do with empirical picture.

We will now turn to Kadu Kuruba tribals and analyse their religious life before making an assessment of political aspirations. It becomes clear as we go through the list of tribals response regarding gods and goddess they worship, but not one of them have indicated that they worship Beeradevaru. We may recall how Kurubas have special devotion and attachment to Beeradevaru. Temples are built to Beeradevaru and the very special drum (Dollu) is associated with the worship and whenever the deity is taken out in a procession.

Now-a-days Dollu Kunita has assumed the status of folk-art and teams are sent to Delhi from Karnataka to participate in the Republic day parade.

In the case of Kadu Kurubas we do not come across any of these activities. This is also an important point of departure between the caste and tribe. One could have expected that Kadu Kurubas in Mysore district could have something in common with the Kurubas in the district regarding religious beliefs and practices. But this is not the case. Thus it becomes evident how some Kuruba respondents whose religious beliefs and practices are in common with other Kurubas yet have returned themselves as Kadu Kurubas. Though they do not share the beliefs and practices found among the Kadu Kurubas they want to pass off for the latter because it will be paying them handsomely once they succeed in getting the tribal status.

The Kadu Kurubas worship many gods and goddess. Some of them are obviously the deities worshipped by the Hindus at large and not necessarily Kurubas. Some of the respondents have mentioned Maramma, Kali, Chowdamma, Venkataramana, Basaveswara, Narayana Swamy – to mention a few names. Otherwise they also worship a large number of deities from different places. Udhburu Mari, Seegur Odathi, Ayyappa, Muthaiah, Bettada devaru, Gopalaswamy, Chikkamma, Doddamma, Doddaiah, Hebbale devaru and many more. It is difficult to comprehend and classify them into Saivite or Vishanvaite. Some of them have typical tribal names, such as Nooraldevaru, Hygoli, Mange and so forth. The significance and functional implications of the various deities worshipped by the tribels was not the focus of the present study, suffice to point-out the tribals and caste differences with regard to the pattern of religious beliefs and practices including the very name of the deities.

To the question whether there are benevolent and malevolent deities, overwhelming majority have sated that most of the deities are benevolent. There are 144 respondents from Antharasanthe, 104 from N.Begur (248 out of 300) and 243 in Hunsur area, a total of 491

out of 601 who have implicit faith in the benevolent nature of the deities they worship.

Living as they do close or on the fringe of forest area and sometimes within the forest and quite isolated, the tribals generally believe in spirits and ghosts. Many of them do not sleep inside the huts for fear of ghosts and spirits but prefer to sleep outside under the open sky. Tribal children studying in Ashram schools carry this fear, anxiety about ghosts and spirits, even they prefer sleeping in the open rather than the hostel buildings. Slightest sound inside the building at night can drive these students so nervous, they refuse to risk this experience. Thus to the question whether the spirits/ghosts are helpful or harmful to tribals, majority of them have stated that they are positively harmful. One hundred forty respondents in Antharasanthe, 133 in N.Begur and 251 in Hunsur area, a total of 524 respondents out of 601 have stated so. Hardly 35 respondents have stated that the spirits and ghosts are helpful. Another 28 believe that they are both helpful as well as harmful. Only 6 respondents have said that they do not believe in spirits and ghosts. Living in the wild perhaps makes man susceptible and hence many natural happenings would appear to be the handiwork of ghosts and spirits. The belief which seem to be so universal with tribals probably is at variance with people living in village clusters in somewhat bigger groups, needless to say that they profess caste as a form of stratification, while tribals in this study constitute an egalitarian group.

Tribals view on disease and death was also ascertained. To the question state your views on diseases and death, about 170 have not responded, 64 from Hunsur, 57 from N.Begur and 49 from Antharasanthe area have not given any views. The rest of them have expressed themselves more about death than about diseases. A couple of them have stated that food variation causes diseases. While about 35 respondents have stated that 'black magic' when used against a family or person can cause both disease and death.

Another 39 respondents from Hunsur area have said that ghosts also can inflict disease and death. While the remainder of the respondents have assigned fate, inevitability, natural phenomena, common to all and finally to god's grace.

In summary it can be said that cent percent of our sample believe in the existence of God, despite superstition, ghosts and belief in black magic. Also 390 respondents have stated that tribal religion and beliefs are egalitarian oriented and so promote sense of equality rather than differences while the rest of the respondents say 'no'. Regarding the services of the priests, the sample is divided equally. While 50 per cent say 'yes' the remaining 50 per cent say they do not need/take the services of the priests. More than half the sample have stated that they do not invite priests nor take their services on ritual occasions including rites of passage. For birth, marriage, death and other ritual occasions, the remaining 253 have stated they, invite the priests to conduct the rites. Sometimes these priests may be drawn from castes rather than tribes.

It is quite interesting and equally important to know how far tribal religion has been influenced by contact with other religious groups or alternatively has retained its original purity. A staggering number of 544 respondents have declared that Hinduism has influenced tribal religion the most. A lone respondent has identified Islam, another one records some other influence, while 55 respondents have stated that they have no contact, nor do their observances are influenced. The picture that emerges is that in post-independence India neither Chiristianity nor Islam can make any headway in this land-locked tribal area. Since the contact of the Kadu Kurubas is mostly with Hindus, be they forest officials, contractors, government officials, people in the neighbouring villages, or while working in coffee estates in Coorg and in the PWD in road construction or finally in the agricultural operations, where Kadu Kurubas hire out as wage labourers. This suggests that the tribals have to interact mostly with

their Hindu neighbours on all fronts. Hence the impact of Hinduism on tribal religion is nothing unnatural. Since times immemorial, Hinduism has grown in size and dimensions by absorbing, whatever has come in contact with it including contradictory beliefs and practices. So there is nothing so surprising when Kadu Kurubas declare Hinduism as the most 'influential factor' in ushering in new or perhaps some changes in tribal beliefs, practices and religious outlook.

Unlike Nagaland, Chotanagpur, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Orissa and North East in general where we come across the influence of Christianity and Missionaries on tribals, in Karnataka, Christian Missionaries were not that active or popular except in pockets which were formerly in Madras Presidency but now are part of Karnataka State. In Dakshina Kannada for instance we have lots of Christians, not from tribal background and many of them hold religious positions. Likewise in Kollegal Taluk which is now in Mysore district, but formerly it was in Madras Presidency, there are some Christian Converts, but again not from tribes. In fact the religious hierarchy filled by non-Kannadigas, specially Tamil christians has lead to lot of agitation from Kannada Christians in Metropolitan Bangalore and other places. Happily Kadu Kurubas are untouched by this trend.

To the question 'Do you sense danger to tribal religion by government interference'. 312 respondents, 165 from Hunsur area and 147 from N.Begur say 'No', while 259 voice some apprehension by saying 'Yes'. Another 30 have no opinion, 153 from H.D.Kote and 106 from Hunsur fear some interference though not directly. But there are ways in which tribal religious beliefs and practices can be influenced by government official actions.

After having considered the religious life of the Kadu Kurubas, it is appropriate to turn our attention to their political life in recent years. What kind of political organization, roles, rights, duties, responsibilities they had earlier is not very significant for the present study. Egalitarianism, was part and parcel of their socio-economic

life. Chiefs and commoners of the type we know of some of the African tribes did not exist among Kadu Kurubas. The tribal elders in Hadis played some important roles as Yajamans and arbitrated whenever there were disputes involving inter-tribal, intra-tribal, caste-tribe cases. Some ritual roles on the occasion of ancestor worship, marriage, divorce were undertaken by them. Otherwise they did not claim any superiority or leadership of the people in the Hadis.

With the advent of democracy and introduction of reservation policy to cover scheduled tribes, by slow degrees both the tribals and government have come to realise the situation. Wherever some NGOs have started working among the tribals, creating awareness and educating the tribals about the government programmes and policies some important activities are undertaken by them. A few such NGOs are working among the Kadu Kurubas for a couple of decades now. Yet the tribals response is very slow. As indicated earlier DEED (Development through Education) has been working effectively since 1980 among the Kadu Kuruba Tribals in Hunsur taluk. Hunsur, H.D.Kote are adjacent taluks in Mysore district. While in the neighbouring Coorg district also there is greater concentration of Kadu Kurubas.

However, till recently and even now the tribals are mobile. For a variety of reasons they shift from one Hadi to another, migrate seasonally to Coorg to work in coffee estates. They have very few household articles of any substantial values, nor are they attached to land, and did not cherish ownership of property traditionally. All these helped their mobility. Even now, families may be away from the Hadi for months together, but seldom their houses are locked, the door is simply shut. Anybody can open and walk in. but there is no apprehension of any loss by the owner or the joy of laying their hands on material possessions by others. Egalitarianism as practiced in state of nature approximates to Rousseau's description of 'State of Nature'. This scenario is in for change under the present democratic set up as well as reservation facilities available to STs.

Whatever political awareness obtains to-day among the Kadu Kurubas is a handi-work of NGOs working among them, occasionally strengthened and supplemented by humane government officials. So a few questions on the role of the government and the experience of the tribals were posed to the respondents while collecting data. What follows below is the response of the tribals, including an assessment of the government role in tribal development and protection. We have noted earlier how both in H.D.Kote and Hunsur taluks a sizeable number of tribals have expressed the opinion that government interference can be a source of danger to profess tribal religion.

To the question if there are any Kadu Kuruba members on formal political organizations like the village Panchayat, Zill Parishad, MLA, MP, Minister and so on, majority of our respondents are aware of village panchayat, 215 in H.D.Kote and 258 in Hunsur area. Only 3 have responded positively about Zilla parishad from H.D.Kote, while 2 from Hunsur taluk are aware of tribal Minister. Nearly 82 in H.D.Kote and 41 respondents in Hunsur area are not aware but have also stated that there are no tribal members in any of the political bodies mentioned above.

To a further question how government can help to conserve tribal life style, the responses are quite numerous and make an interesting reading. In all this common opinion on certain areas can be highlighted. Government should provide agricultural facilities, we have 107 respondents from H.D.Kote and 53 from Hunsur. There are 29 respondents from H.D.Kote and 61 in Hunsur area who have stated that government should provide educational facilities, provide job opportunities and all other kinds of assistance, including financial help. Quite a number of respondents are involved in both the taluks. But the most important point they have struck in common is the demand for re-entry into forest. A total of 124 Kadu Kurubas, 67 from H.D.Kote and 57 from Hunsur area have putforth this demand. Right now agitation is on when the newspapers are reporting burning down of the standing crops by the forest officials with the assistance of the

police, alleging illegal cultivation of forest land while the tribals are also organizing to meet this onslaught both by constitutional methods and by offering dharna. The problems which were simmering for months, have now come to the fore particularly in National park area in Nagarahole and 'Save Tiger' project area in Bandipur forest. In all this the tribals appear to be a helpless lot before the government directed action. But no Kuruba leader worth the name has so far issued even a press statement in favour of Kadu Kurubas. This calculated silence on the part of the kurubas is suspect. But NGOs working in the tribal area, 'DEED' and FEDINA-Vikasa in Hunsur and H.D.Kote area have stood by them and condemn the official high-handedness against helpless poor tribals.

To another question, whether the government is working for tribal development, the responses are as follows: In H.D.Kote, which included Antharasanthe and N.Begur, totally 20 per cent Betta Kurubas involving 118 respondents, barring 24, the rest of the them have recorded official apathy, other people passing off for tribals, with emphasis on other people passing off. Another 182 Jenu Kuruba respondents, constituting 30 per cent, barring 40 respondents who concede that government is working for tribal development, the remaining respondents state emphatically about the official apathy and other people passing off for tribals. In Hunsur taluk with 295 Jenu Kurubas and just 6 Betta Kurubas, only 87 respondents state the government is working for tribal development. The remaining 214, does record official apathy and others passing off for tribals as the main stumbling block for tribal development. A total of 144 respondents have stated others passing off for tribals, while another 213 have clubbed official apathy plus non-tribals passing off for tribals offering a formidable hurdle for tribal development. The above two adds up to 357, which is more than 50 percent of the sample. Hence, there is good reason to endorse the tribals opinion as a cause of concern. The government which is charged with the responsibility of tribal welfare and development should pay heed to the opinion and check to

set right official apathy perhaps by rewarding exemplary and honest officials who have been sympathetic to the problems of tribals and treat them as fellow-human beings.

Non-tribal people passing off for tribals is a serious problem. The government should evolve mechanism of keeping the tribal interests apart and not mix their problems with people aspiring to acquitre ST status constitutionally for the sake of reservation benefits, though they do not have anything in common with the tribals. Government should avoid yielding to pressure tactics by organized caste groups, which over the years, in many states of the country have succeeded in getting included in SC/ST category. This will promote vested interests. The plight of the SCs/STs can never be set right by adding more groups drawn from non-SC/non-ST category. It has already been pointed out earlier how in Karnataka itself this has been done. This process will create more problems that in could solve. It is high time scheduling is done on scientific basis rather than by politicians, who cannot afford to look at the issue objectively.

To yet another question whether the tribals consider that the government is unnecessarily interfering in the economic and allied activities of the tribal people, the responses are as follows: From H.D.Kote area 140 respondents do not concur with the statement, while 160 respondents are in agreement with the suggestions that economic activities, hence tribal life style itself is endangered. But from Hunsur area a substantial majority of 237 respondents are in agreement. This again amounts to, that more than 50 per cent of our sample, totally 397 respondents feel that government policies towards the tribals is one of deprivation rather than providing facilities for sustainable development. It may be recalled here that quite a few tribals want re-entry to forest not as a concession but a necessity to sustain tribal economic activities and survival. A nation which holds its customs, traditions and culture in high esteem and takes pride in 'unity in diversity' is duty bound to conceive and promote tribal customs,

traditions and culture as long as it adds to diversity. Tribals need not be unnecessarily driven to become part of the mainstream.

Similarly majority of tribals are positive about the usefulness of tribal development schemes and if properly implemented they think it is quite beneficial to the tribals. As many as 500 respondents, 288 from H.D.Kote and 222 from Hunsur have expressed to this effect.

To the question whether tribal people are subject to exploitation, 307 respond positively, of which 96 come from Hunsur area and 211 from H.D.Kote. Nearly 193, 104 from Hunsur and 89 from H.D.Kote are of the opinion they are not exploited. Out of total 124 Betta Kurubas, as many as 96 say that they are subjected to exploitation, the remaining 28 say they are not exploited. While 476 strong Jenu Kuruba sub-group, with 311 respondents affirming exploitation, we have just 165 who deny any exploitation. Out of 311, Hunsur accounts for 190 and the remaining 121 are from H.D.Kote area. Similarly of the 165 respondents 104 belong to Hunsur area and the remaining 61 from H.D.Kote.

Finally to the question, list the hurdles to tribal people, we have 525 out of 601 who have indicated that forest officials are the biggest hurdle. Of this 257 are from H.D.Kote and 268 belong to Hunsur area. Out of 525 total 116 are Betta Kurubas, 110 from H.D.Kote and 6 from Hunsur. The remaining 409 belong to Jenu Kuruba sub-division, of which 262 are from Hunsur and the remaining 147 come from H.D.Kote area.

Why forest officials alone are mentioned by a vast majority of tribals is not an enigma. On the face of it, what is perpetrated against the tribals by the officers appears to be real rather than imaginary. The smuggling of valuable timber such as sandal wood and teak is carried out systematically. Only once in a while the forest department personnel succeed in tracking down the culprits and impound the goods. Also hunting in the forest, killing elephants for tusks, or tigers for its claws and skin, is normally undertaken by gun wielding poachers

The tribals can hardly own or wield gun, nor can they afford to indulge in smuggling valuable wood and so on. The reason is very simple. These activities involve a number of people who form a network. Moreover, smuggled timber or tusk should have a market. Tribals could hardly know how the network functions, what money transactions are involved as it happens that these objects reach international market perhaps through underworld dons.

There is very little evidence to suggest that tribal people loot and destroy forest wealth. On the contrary, it is the well-connected, powerful vested interests that are involved. The general conviction that there is a nexus between the politicians, smugglers, police and forest officials in which the poor tribals are caught and cases are booked, there is very little to suggest that tribals are involved. So far, how many tribals are indicted by the forest officials when parties are caught and purnished. If statistics are made available, perhaps the myth would crumble.

What the tribals get from the forest is for their immediate use and survival. Dry wood which is used as fuel for cooking and other purposes is carried by head load and not transported in lorries, trucks or cars. Occasionally tribal labour may be involved by the smugglers. The tribals cannot be equated with smugglers. The other items which the tribals would collect from the forest would be roots, fruits, tubers, greens, berries, wax, honey – a variety of minor forest produce, and sometimes, small game birds and animals.

When the tribals are thrown out of the forests, denied entry into forest, their major economic activities come to a stand still. While shifting cultivation is banned, not enough land or alternative sources of living are provided by the Government. In fact, even living accommodation with necessary re-settlement facilities are seldom provided by the authorities. There are enough instances from all over the country, where tribals are faced with total deprivation, once they are uprooted from their original habitat. All the lofty ideals of

rehabilitation have seldom materialised because of official apathy and treating the tribals casually.

Change of attitude on the part of government and bureaucrats is a first step. The need to consider them as human beings and not as utterly inferior stock is very essential. This would help both the government and tribals. Right now Kadu Kurubas and other tribal people are organizing to protest, offer dharna and go on jatha against unnecessary harassment by forest officials. For in the last few weeks – July – August 1996 – standing crops which would have been harvested in few weeks time by the tribals are destroyed, set on fire, and tribals are beaten up by the forest officials who are carrying out these operations under police protection. The stage is set with this kind of high handedness for tribal unrest and insurgency which did not exist in this part of the country so far. Only future will tell whether 'Bhuria communittee' recommendations would be implemented and tribal self-rule granted. Any limitations and loop-holes can be plugged after an initial trial of the recommendations.

Those who have done research among tribal people, like Walter Fernandes, Geetha Menon or rare bureaucrats like B.D.Sharma who took to his heart the plight and problems of tribals or even those NGOs who are working among Kadu Kurubas and others are generally of the opinion regarding the harshness of forest laws on tribals. Unlike Christian missionaries these are our own people, who are highlighting the tribal problems. The government should repose faith and trust them, when government machinery has nearly failed to live up to the aspirations of people.

The problems of the tribal people cannot be brushed aside or wished away. It should be attended with due understanding. It is not fair on the part of the government to go on adding more and more groups to ST list, so as to jeopardise the interests and survival of the genuine tribals. Those who pass off are the ones who grab all the constitutional benefits, and so far either they have gone scot-free or

organized to get included in the ST group. This would only suggest that the powerful and well-to-do will always have an edge on the hapless poor people and there is no social justice. It amounts to eradication of the poor and not poverty. It could constitute a serious violation of human rights as well when the tribals are denied their rights to existence by forcing them out of forest and not providing necessary facilities of rehabilitation.

The acute environmental degradation caused by reckless felling of forest trees and denuding is done not by tribals but by commercial interests backed by political power in the name of industrialisation, promoting tourism or doing something else in the name of development at the expense of poorer people who are helpless before the state sponsored terrorism. In fact for many problems that have cropped up in tribal belt in post independence India, it may be pointed out that wrong policies, negligence and ill treating or exploiting the tribal people could be cited as reasons. NGOs working among tribals are nearly unanimous regarding the tribals love of forest wealth. Unnecessary harassment experienced by the tribals may be at the root of insurgency in some parts of India.

Karnataka could be saved from these kinds of problems partly because tribal population is small and concentrated in 4-5 districts. A more judicious and imaginative policy is required. The demands of the tribals centre around their survival, keeping the body and soul together and are not get-rich quick schemes or grabbing.

While there is so much of resentment on the role of forest officials, the same tribals reaction to questions whether they consider, money lenders, business community, contractors and neighbouring villagers as exploitors, only a negligible number have said 'yes'. In all 59 respondents 23 from Hunsur and 36 from H.D.Kote concur with the suggestion. As against this why 525 out of 601 total should have indicated the forest officials as a major hurdle for their existence and survival needs careful rational thinking than maintenance of law and order after willfully creating such situation by wrong policies and high handedness.

As stated earlier, tribal people – the Kadu Kurubas have little or no political organization of the kind which is discernible among the Kurubas. Even within the democratic setup all that the Kadu Kurubas have achieved pertains to exercising their voting rights during general elections. In the light of the fact that more often than not tribal voters might be cornered by a political party agent with post-poll promises of all kind of assistance and the entire Hadi voted enmass a particular party candidate.

Given the tribals dis-interest in many of the things which interest other Indians – castes – lack of political conscience due to absence of any kind of organization to this effect, it is easy to exploit them. It is only quite recently with the introduction of Panchayat Raj institutions, the Kadu Kurubas have got acquainted with the political processes at village level, taluk and district levels. Again because of the processes of political representation on reservation basis to STs, some of them are serving as members of Village Panchayat and Zilla Parishad. Kurubas are unlikely to have come under this ambit till now.

Again part of the process can be attributed to the NGOs working among tribals spreading general awareness and awakening. There are also now some tribal organizations which voice the tribal needs and problems. In this sense some leaders have also emerged. We have the Budakattu Krishikara Sangha, Vanavasi Mahila Sangha, and similar such organizations which have come to the fore in the face of forced eviction of tribals from Nagarahole National Park area and permitting Taj Group to start a Resort to promote tourism at the cost of and disruption of tribal life and environmental degradation. Now the Nagarahole Budakattu Rights Establishment Organization has emerged and all tribals from Mysore district and Coorg are involved to oppose the government scheme.

We will now turn to the emergent problems of 'protective discrimination' in the next chapter. Along with reservation there appears to be a resurgence of casteism and communalism. All the problems in post independence India revolve around this phenomena. How best the nation will grapple with these fissiparous tendencies at this juncture is just speculative.

CHAPTER – VIII

WHITHER RESERVATION – THE GREAT UNIFYING – DIVISIVE FORCE

The caption perhaps sound enigmatic, but as we proceed it should become clear as a process working at cross-purposes and not serving the purpose for which it was meant – The greatest good of the greatest number in the country, particularly people drawn from the deprived sections in Indian society.

Reservation which has come to be identified as "protective discrimination" is by no means a novel method evolved in post independence India although it acquired a national dimension only with the adoption of the Indian constitution in 1950. This was specifically with reference to scheduled castes – belonging to former untouchable castes and scheduled tribes. But before 1950, there certainly obtained some kind of reservation, particularly in South India, in Madras presidency, princely Mysore state and elsewhere. The backward classes movement which emerged in Madras presidency at the turn of 20th century has certainly become part of backward classes movement elsewhere in the country. It originally started as Non-Brahmin movement and under successive leaders acquired new dimensions so that well-to-do non-Brahmins provided leadership, offered hostel facilities, encouraged education of candidates from Non-Brahmin groups – broadly equivalent to Sudra varna and eventually were able to compare, and tally with Brahmins holding government jobs.

Education and Government employment, the two important aspects were used as the plank to highlight the forward Brahmin caste-group in contrast to the Non-Brahmins who remained backward. With the coming of the British and introduction of English, only the traditionally literate group, the Brahmins took advantage of the situation and the qualified Brahmins naturally secured jobs in the government. Sudra varna was traditionally kept out of the purview of education,

nor did they take initiative to learn English and get formal education with the coming of British. However, they woke up to reality, though late and started organizing. By slow degrees, with all the ups and downs, twists and turns, they succeeded in their demand for a share in education, government jobs and political representation. Establishment of hostels, scholarships and free studentships helped to promote the cause of education which lead to procuring jobs. Also nomination of known leaders on the political bodies by the Governor or other competant authority opened up a chance for power sharing.

The Non-Brahmin movement in Madras presidency provided impetus for similar attempts in Bombay presidency and princely Mysore state. In Bombay presidency, under Jyotiba phule education received encouragement. Schools and hostels were started and run by phule and his associates. In princely Mysore state, the native rulers were broadminded. Education received encouragement. Schools and colleges were made available. Gradually recruitment in government offices to qualified non-Brahmins or backward classes were thrown open. Even political representation by nomination was introduced. It was based on the criteria of ownership of land and the amount of revenue one paid. Only well-to-do can aspire from among the BCs to fill the Representative Assembly seats. With the initiative taken by the rulers in Mysore to encourage backward classes, the movement did not take a formal shape. It essentially remained dormant until fresh attempts were made after independence to appoint Backward Classes Commissions in the state.

Both in Madras and Bombay presidency, the non-Brahmin movement became well organized, lead to emergence of several leaders, acquired political clout. So that in later years many splinter groups have emerged as independent regional political parties. This is much more true of Madras presidency, now the state of Tamil Nadu than Bombay presidency – Maharastra, Phule's followers floated a political organization and functioned as such for a while. In all these attempts it was mostly Sudras who were forging ahead and

there is very little evidence to suggest that non-Brahmin movement also included the Untouchable Groups and Tribals or actually carried their problems to the fore.

The Sudras with large number of castes and sub-castes, again forming a hierarchy both ritual and social accounting for 60-65 per cent of the population certainly constituted a deprived category. But unlike untouchables, the sudras held landed property, carried on business and commercial activities. They did not suffer from the pangs of untouchability. Only in education and allied fields they suffered deprivation. Thus the task of providing constitutional safe-guards to untouchables and tribal people had to wait till 1950 with Ambedkar as their spokesman. Ambedkar was also Chairman of the constitution Drafting Committee, hence his attempts to secure reservations particularly to these two category became little easier. For Ambedkar himself belonged to an untouchable community, Mahars in Maharastra, had acquired extensive knowledge about caste system, Hinduism, Buddhism and the status of Panchamas the fifth group of Avarnas or Antyajas who remained outside the pale of chaturvarna order.

Ambedkar's qualifications in Anthropology, Sociology, Economics, Political Science and finally Law certainly provided a solid background to make him as one of the best social thinkers not only among his contemporaries but also of 20th century India. He is often accused as not being patriotic enough since he did not participate in freedom movement. He did not join the mainstream political party either. But when he decided to participate in political affairs, he did so as a leader of the Indian untouchable castes. At last the groups which remained voiceless and almost dumb for centuries, found in Ambedkar a champion, fearless spokesman and a bitter critique of the Indian – Hindu society mainly, the caste system and Hinduism.

His ability as an uncompromising spokesman of untouchables came to limelight after the 'Round Table' conference in London in 1930, where he could clinch the 'communal award' from the British

for the untouchables. Ambedkar argued that untouchables were not Hindus, while Gandhi was emphatic about the Hindu status of untouchables and thus opposed communal award as an imperial devise to divide people. The 'Poona pact' of 1932 which Ambedkar was goaded to sign to save the life of Mahatma who undertook a 'fast-unto-death' until the award was withdrawn. This however, put Gandhi and other leaders under a moral obligation to provide some avenues for political reservation and representation of untouchables. The Poona pact snatched away the rights that were provided under communal award. But the alternatives suggested by Gandhi and upheld by the congress party provided some sop to the problem.

It is doubtful if somebody other than Ambedkar would have come out with the proposal of 'reservations' to SCs/STs at the time of drafting the constitution. Thanks to the choice of Ambedkar as chairman, and all those who were involved in the debates of the constituent assembly, agreed to provide political reservations, economic assistance, education and government jobs, a certain number to be reserved for these two categories. Initially it was for a period of ten years and to be reviewed to assess the success or otherwise of the policy. Also untouchable converts to Sikhism were included in the SC list. All this is part of history as it happened initially.

The first committee headed by Elaya perumal then congress party MP went round the country during 1960's and recorded the impact of reservation policy. The situation needed extension of the period. The conditions which characterised Indian society for thousands of years of course could not be changed so soon. Socio-economic factors, which promoted dependence of untouchables on upper castes specially land-owning groups in rural India remain unchanged or with some superficial changes. Caste and religious discrimination, marked by absence of equality, social justice continue. Thus reservation policy is continued and new lease of life is given to political representation. Parliamentary committee goes round the country as a ritual and recommends extension.

In the field of education, government jobs and political representation some strides are made. These are visible. Social change is a slow process and takes much longer especially in the Indian context because social status is ascriptive rather than an achieved or acquire thing. By birth one enjoys high status or low status. Social equality cannot be brought about by legislation alone. So reservation policy especially for the SCs/STs has generated a number of problems. Scheduled castes comparatively are in a better position to-day than scheduled tribes. Strength of population, organizations that have emerged among the rank and file, and the political clout that emerges drawing the attention of people at large are some of the advantages, for SCs spread in villages, towns and cities. The location of tribal settlements, illiteracy, ignorance, poverty, harsh forest legislation are all combined to keep the tribal problems in low profile, while their social status even traditionally did not carry the stigma of untouchability as is true of addition of touchable SCs to-day. The tribals are considered backward and continue to remain backward struggling for their mere survival.

The traditional untouchable castes are by no means a single caste. It is a conglomeration of castes and sub-castes. Regional, linguistic, cultural differences effectively block any attempt to organize them into a single block. Though in general they face similar problems, yet they are divided amongst themselves. The most numerous chamar caste has spread and covers effectively the whole of North India, yet they are not united. For within the chamar caste-group there are 8-10 sub-castes, following different occupations some of them are quite advanced (forward), while others remain backward. So far reservation benefits are availed mostly by forward communities among SCs. This is the picture which would emerge at all India level as well.

Those who have remained backward have not been able to get proper attention from government agencies. So class, mass differences have marked the operation of reservation policy. Unless the policy is tilted in favour of the more deserving, there is very little hope that the condition of these people will ever change or improve.

To add fuel to fire, as if the above distortions were not enough, many non-SCs have successfully passed off for SCs and some have been able to get the SC tag and included in the schedule. The population has swelled, and the facilities are thinly distributed, passing off is more frequently resorted to, in particular to secure jobs and enroll in professional colleges, medical and engineering education.

Unwittingly the government is a party to all this. Given this trend the scheduled caste problems will continue and so the new slogan by the leaders that "as long as caste remains reservation should continue". To this we might as well add that "as long as reservation exists castes will multiply and they are firmly entrenched in Indian soil".

The problems of the STs is still worse. They are located in isolated spots, hilly area, forest fringe with very little or no knowledge regarding constitutional facilities. They are subjected to all kinds of exploitation by the 'civilized society'. They are generally considered quite ignorant and backward by the rest of society. Even among tribals some are quite forward while others have remained backward. Wherever Christian missionaries worked among the tribals, as for instance in Chotanagapur region and North East India, the people are well organized and vocal. But the inter-tribal differences and rivalries, and even intra-tribal relationships are quite often one of hatred and less cordial. The situation is also converted into law and order problem by the civil authorities, administrators in the area.

The present study has concentrated on Kadu Kurubas because of some specific issues involved. Otherwise in Mysore district we have different tribes like Soligas, Yaravas, Hakkipikkis and a few others. Even among the Kadu Kurubas we have Betta Kuruba, Jenu Kuruba, Mullu Kuruba divisions, whose problems are different. Hence their approach to get constitutional benefits would vary depending on the perception of the situation and felt-needs.

Thanks to the NGOs working among the tribals, they have nearly succeeded in creating general awareness and educating them on

constitutional provisions. The NGOs have spearheaded in two important areas; providing health/medical care and educational facilities. This at best is happening during the last couple of decades. Preceeding this, the British administration introduced certain legislation, so that it should bring revenue to the administration. After India attained independence not only the imperial rules and regulations continued, but the new laws enacted are harsher than the earlier ones. Also by now people from the plains moved to tribal belt as money lenders, for business and trading purposes, some contractors in the company of forest officials. Tribals were/are exploited in a variety of ways.

In Karnataka, as the respondents have indicated, it is mostly the forest officials who are terrorising them. But the other forms of exploitation are minimised if not totally eradicated since the NGOs started working in tribal areas.

Equally disturbing process has set in, whereby non-tribals are passing off for tribals and claiming the benefits which are available to STs. Earlier, it is pointed out how the parivara caste in Mysore district has come in the way of tribal development, particularly in the field of education. Seats in medical and engineering colleges have been claimed by the parivara caste candidates, long before they started organizing and forging to claim tribal status. Quite a few organized efforts marked their attempt to secure tribal tag. Perhaps they will succeed if not already the status is granted. The Raja parivara sub-division, claims that they were rulers once upon a time. But now they are in the game. Given this, it would be a miracle if not the 'Eighth wonder' of the world, if when a genuine tribal doctor or engineer or even a post-graduate can emerge. Admission to degree, post-graduate degree, recruitment in university, state government departments including central government offices, ST category is represented by the Parivara caste candidates.

In addition to the Parivara, now Kurubas are on the track to

rope in themselves or the Kadu Kurubas, and want the Kadu Kuruba ST status to be extended to the caste. This may also materialise with power constellations being in favour of Kurubas at different levels. This again will seal the fate of Kadu Kurubas. It would be equally difficult to think of a Kadu Kuruba doctor, engineer or similar positions in government department. The Dalit Christians also are agitating for SC tag. Untouchable converts to Christianity now want the privileges of reservation on par with SCs. This may also be conceeded, since we already have a precedence of Neo-Buddhists in Maharashtra enjoying constitutional benefits.

The net result of 'protective discrimination' policy, the uplift of SCs and STs has many ramifications over the last four decades. It is encouraging different caste groups in the country to organize and pressurise the government to include them under SC/ST category. There are quite a few precedents in Karnataka and elsewhere, so that it would be very difficult to stop the move. Political leaders generally do not want to risk the displeasure of voters. Everybody will ultimately succeed in their aspirations provided they keep up the pressure.

It is now the backward classes tag that is reigning supreme and on an all India basis since the time of Mandal Commission. The South Indian Backward Classes or non-Brahmin movement has been in existence for more than six decades. This discrimination in favour of Sudra varna, especially in former Madras Presidency, now Tamil Nadu lead to an exodus of South Indian Brahmins towards North India. The central government offices, universities and lot of bureaucrats and other positions in the Northern states, especially Delhi continue to be filled by Brahmin candidates till recently. But with Mandal Commission recommendations and its implementation changes are visible.

While central universities and institutions have not adopted reservation policy to SCs and STs in recruitment to teaching posts,

they can ill afford to ignore the onslaught of Backward Classes, which are now the most powerful group. To attain bargaining position, every caste and sub-caste throw their lot with larger groups and call themselves 'All India Organization' though the particular caste group is limited to only a small region or a state.

The Akhila Bharatha Veerashaiva Mahasabha for instance is a state level organization with the above caption. We do not get Veerashaivas in North India, yet the organization is designated at national level. The sub-caste differences, however, have not disappeared, on the contrary on certain other occasions, the differences are emphasized. Thus the seeming unity at higher level is very much divisive force at other levels.

One could see the country's people divided at several levels for different reasons. We have the linguistic divisions, then caste, sub-caste, and religious divisions. The number of castes and sub-castes that have come to the fore in the wake of reservation policy are incredible. By emphasizing the differences, the groups tend to divide and sub-divide. This is followed by attributes of backwardness in several ways from other such groups. Reservation policy is perhaps construed as a god sent boon in contemporary India. Instead of secular democratic Republic, caste and communal feelings are promoted. In this sense 'Protective discrimination' is one of the major divisive force in contemporary India. Casteism has increased by leaps and bounds. Traditionally surnames in many parts of India indicated the caste or sub-caste. The trend now is on the increase people have started adding surnames based on caste. Also caste organizations have sprang up all over the country. From Brahmins to scheduled castes, we get well organized associations with definite set purpose.

Never before, similar things happened in the history of the nation. But for the intervention of Supreme Court and a directive to limit reservation to 50 percent, different political leaders would like to raise the quota. Some of them have already grasped how, economic

liberalization, privatization and multinational agents moving into the country would upset reservation policy. So they have started that Multinationals and Private concerns should also be governed by reservation policy.

Like caste system, reservations based on caste is fast becoming a bane to the country. How can reservation be made applicable to ever expanding and splitting caste groups? A modest estimate of some 3000 castes of yester years surely has multiplied and every other day some new caste or sub-caste names surface.

So far the pros and cons of the policy have not been evaluated. Who are the people who are benefited by these measures? There is perhaps no specific data either for SCs, STs and muchless for BCs, OBCs, SEBCs. Is it any wonder that corruption and nepotism have grown to full size and have spread to all parts of life of the country. The 'Creamy layer' directive of the supreme court to differentiate the more deserving from the less deserving among the BCs is simply unworkable.

No one, not even the government ever thought of having or exercising de-scheduling devise to control the ever increasing demand or evaluated the impact of the policy. On the contrary demand and increased demand for reservations on all fronts has lead to the longevity of politicians of all hues. Expressing verbal support to aspiring groups had made the politicians so popular as to brighten their political fortunes, as they can amass a following to reach the bargaining position. Politicians as leaders of specific groups, however, do not suffer any privation if something not very favourable to the cause should occur.

Way back, when the anti-Brahminical movement was brewing in South India, many well-to-do philanthropists drawn from BCs, started community/caste hostels in towns and cities for the benefit of BC students. These hostels in due course of time obtained financial assistance from the government. Thus they became aided institutions which meant the expenditure involved in running the hostels were

met by the government itself. Almost all towns, and cities in South India, not to speak of only Karnataka are packed with specific caste hostels aided by government funds. Government itself floating community hostels for BCs, SCs, STs and others is but a recent phenomena.

Like hostels, now schools, institutions of higher education and even kindergartens are started by specific caste leaders. These institutions do not necessarily cater to the needs of a particular caste. On the other hand, they are a commercial proposition. Hefty donations, capitation and fees are collected from students who seek admission. Even these institutions receive government grants in due course of time. These institutions by definition are pro-well-to-do and children from poorer sections can hardly hope to enroll in them. Anyhow, during the last 4-5 years, law courts are again involved in directing the private managements on admissions, quota for different categories, fee structure and so on. In Karnataka, in 1940s the Brahmin's first started the trend. To day we have Jains, Lingayats, Okkaligas, Kurubas, Christains, Muslims even Scheduled Castes starting educational institutions especially medical and engineering colleges. This is a money spinning business. Having recognized these institutions, the government cannot go back. Clamoring for 'protective discrimination' is but a logical step.

In fact caste system has not been static down the centuries. There is nothing like a 'pure' caste. The number of castes and sub-castes in each of the Chaturvarnas as well as Panchamas suggests periodical 'fission' and 'fusion' of different segments. It is this process of fission and fusion which has been operating over the centuries. If mere sanskritization, emulation and imitation of Brahmins by other caste groups were alone operating in the sub-continent, it is very difficult to account for a large number of castes and sub-castes among Brahmins, possibly forming a hierarchy with so much variation among themselves not to speak of ritual purity. Brahmins are not a monolith. With so much secrecy surrounding them, how successfully, in which areas others can imitate them?

There are meat eating and fish eating Brahmins, spread from Kashmir to Bengal, Orissa, Karnataka and down south. The Maha Brahmins who specialise in death rituals or the Marka Brahmins of Karnataka certainly are discriminated and have low status. The Iyengars are a new addition to Brahmin caste group since the time of Ramanuja. Amma Coorgis are the Brahminical version of Coorgis since the later half of 19th century, while Coorgis themselves are of Tribal origin. Thus the valid question is which particular Brahmin caste-group or sub-caste has provided the non-Brahmins and possibly SCs these days with a model of emulation? Ultimately, it boils down that in the long history of caste system many have crossed over from one boundry to another and crystallized into different groups over centuries.

Religious conversion in this country has no meaning and much less credibility. For pre-conversion caste/religious beliefs, customs, traditions continue to rule the private life, while for public identification the new affiliation may be used. This is true of Veerasaivas, a 12th century revolutionary reformist movement of Karnataka. It is equally true of Indian Christains, Muslims, Sikhs, Arya Samajists and of course the neo-Buddhists, the SC converts to Buddhism.

It is also incorrect to argue that reservation has lead to fall in standards or teaching posts should not be reserved. Merit and the so-called meritorious are now-a-days highly suspect. The kind of scandals which have been hidden in our examination system, caste, community prejudices, corruption, nepotism, that occasionally surfaces from selection committee choices, including P.S.C. and U.P.S.C. should serve as eye-openers. Those who can afford can buy degrees, classes, ranks as well as posts is a truism in contemporary India with no holds barred. There is nothing like born intelligent or born teacher. Since these are acquired, opportunities and environment should go a long way in shaping a good teacher or bright student.

In contemporary Uttar Pradesh and Bihar the emergence of Backward Classes should be looked at as a process of historical

accidents culminating in Mandalization. The Sudra varna as stated earlier is a conglomeration of castes and sub-castes forming a hierarchy. In the past powerful castes in this category have provided native kings – paleyagars, who have bestowed favours on Brahmin priests and advisors. Landed property and other forms of wealth is/ has of course been held historically by some of these castes. We have Marathas in Maharastra, Reddys and Kammas in Andhra Pradesh, Okkaligas and Lingayats in Karnataka to mention only a few instances from South. Likewise Jats, Yadavs, Kurmis and Koiris have held land thus constituting the upper strata among sudras who have acquired a clout and discriminate against the lower strata of the sudras is not a strange phenomena. Class – which goes with riches and power is built into caste system. Poor and helpless from the same caste are seldom treated on a footing of equality by the rich and the powerful in the same category.

In this connection, it is interesting to quote Meenakshi Jain[1]. She writes, "the determination of the backward castes to seize power together with the internal contradictions and struggles within their alliance system has thrown the politics of entire northern region into turmoil. For while yadavs rebel against Jats, Kurmis, challenge yadavs, and lower sudras turn against upper sudras, the backward castes as a whole refuse to align with any setup that does not concede them total supremacy. Though not coherent enough to capture power on their own, they are powerful enough to prevent others from forming a rival stable order". It is further said that "Even though these castes have complementary interests, hierarchical considerations remain as important for leaders of the peasant communities as for the twice-born. It is difficult for a Jat for example, to accept an Ahir or Gujar as his leader. .... he (Jat) is a shade higher than the Ahir or Gujar. If this is so, it follows that the middle order cannot in the long run produce a political organization of its own. It must remain fragmented and unable to consolidate its hold on power[2].

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1. M.N. Srinivas (Ed) 1996, Caste, Its Twentieth Century Avatar, Penguin Books India Pvt. ltd., New Delhi, M. Jain "Backward castes and social change in U.P. and Bihar pp. 135-151.
2. Ibid. 1996, p. 147.

Fortunately India is much larger than Uttar pradesh and Bihar. We can afford to take these as initial historical processes. Two or three decades is just too short a period historically to conclude or foresee the kind of changes that may or cannot come about. We need to be cautious and not unduly pessimistic at this juncture. A vast country like ours can certainly throw up enlightened leadership from among the ranks of sudras at an appropriate time. But the interval is an excruciating period indeed. The present 'Rajguru' of United Front Government at the centre exercising remote control, V.P.Singh gave green signal to implement caste based reservations to usher in a 'secular revolution' as Srinivas says in the introduction "the former Raja of Manda became the sant of Mandal. That very many others saw him as the greatest divisive force in independent India was the flip side of the coin"[1].

Although it is often said history repeats itself, for social scientist it is never the same and any such repetition under a different time scale will necessarily be accompanied by different sets of events. Thus desirable and healthy turn of events can be hoped. The fate of the really backward, needy and deserving groups; the SCs, STs, women, children, above all the future of the nation and its integrity need to be watched and kept in focus.

In the next and concluding chapter, more attention will be paid to elaborate the ills that have accompanied reservation along with some good results. Corrective measures seem to be extremely important to set it on right 'track'. For reservation per Se is not bad. But the way it is operating has been responsible for all the major ills that the country is facing at this juncture.

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1. Ibid., 1996, p XXVIII Introduction.

CHAPTER – IX

CONCLUDING REMARKS AND SUGGESTIONS

What follows below as concluding remarks and suggestions consists the summary of findings and conclusions arrived at. The study attempts to throw light on how constitutional measures like "protective discrimination" are working at cross-purposes. Hence the intended upliftment of the poor and downtrodden sections is bound to remain unfulfilled. Reservation policy has landed the country into a state of embroilment. A large majority of Indians are after securing reservation. The policy itself is based on caste system.

The phenomenal increase in caste consciousness among all sections of Indian people, with very few exceptions has affected both public and private life of the citizens. There is no alien power on whom we can put the blame. The nation itself is responsible for this situation. Politicians, educated class, officials and intellectuals should share the blame, whereby the common people are also misled. Before India attained freedom, caste for all practical purposes had a role in private life. But to-day it is much sought after public institution lending itself to state level and national level organizations. Many of our political leaders participate in caste gatherings and promise to get reservation facilities.

The trend has now nearly enveloped the entire country and many caste-groups have dragged in the tribals also, although the tribals themselves are not directly involved. The geometric progression of corruption, nepotism, casteism, communalism, favouritism, jealousy, hatred, violence in the country is affecting the people at all levels and places, villages, towns, cities have been touched by the above phenomena in general.

Corrective steps can be devised even now to contain the ill effects and lead the people and nation in right direction. Rationalization of reservation policy, making it time-bound, identifying deserving, more deserving, most deserving and least deserving across all castes and

religious groups, with provision for de-scheduling, and administering it with a firm hand, with emphasis on social justice and transparency, should reduce the present predicament gradually. The mad rush for reservation benefits and passing off for SCs and STs can be contained. For this the ethos of the country has to be reoriented and recharged. The political leaders should take the lead and set an example.

This is an empirical study carried out in Karnataka during 1994-95. It deals with one of the numerous caste-group-Kurubas belonging to Sudra Varna. Juxtaposed with the Kuruba caste is the Kadu Kuruba Tribals. While Kurubas (Shepherds) are found all over the state settled in villages, towns and cities, the Kadu Kurubas are concentrated in the districts of Mysore and Coorg.

Because of Common nomenclature, in association with reservation benefits that covers the Kadu Kurubas as STs, unusual interest is evinced by the Kuruba caste-group, to integrate the two groups, so as to avail reservation benefits. There is hardly anything in common between the two groups except the common name. This has come in handy for the Kurubas to articulate that both constitute the same group. While most of the Kadu Kurubas are living in the forest or on forest fringe, the attempts of the Kurubas for integrating the two groups were not known to them. Even after coming to know this, they are not a party to this move.

The caste-tribe syndrome throws up some interesting facts. Karnataka has very little tribal population in contrast to states of North East region, Bihar, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and so forth. But the numerical smallness of the population has not made life easy or comfortable to them. There are several reasons for this. Firstly the harsh forest legislation is threatening their very existence. The forest officials and others involved in administration are not necessarily sympathetic to their cause. On the other hand they have to safeguard themselves against the manoeuvres hatched by caste groups to consider the tribe and caste as one and the same.

We have instances in the distant as well as recent past when Tribes have become caste-like groups. The Coorgis are an example of this. But well crystallized caste-groups claiming for tribal status is novel and a recent phenomenon. This trend has come into force with the emergence of Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) coming under the 'protective discrimination' benefits. The 'politics of passing off' cuts into the 'economics of tribal development'. This trend has to be put an end to with determination by the government. As long as government keeps yielding to the pressures, there will be more groups trying to get into the schedule or force the government to evolve any measures to fit them in a category deriving benefits. Apart from SC/ST, BC, OBC, SEBC now the government is contemplating of introducing 10 per cent reservation to economically weaker sections presumably drawn from upper strata. This particular issue has already been ignored by the Supreme Court, while deliberating on Mandal Commission. The Supreme Court's directive to states to identify the 'creamy layer' from among the BCs and eliminate them for reservation benefits seems an unworkable proposition. The latest response from Kerala on the supreme court "Ultimatum" to comply with its directives is a summary reply that there are no creamy layer sections among Keralites; the stand taken by Kerala government is bound to send wrong signals elsewhere in the country. Self-denial is cultivated at all levels. People do not volunteer to comply with court directives. The government seems more inclined to safeguard the interests of voters in elections than take risk in identifying and muchless declaring the identity of creamy layer. It simply does not work.

The present study covers a sample of 601 Kuruba households drawn from Bellary, Chitradurga, Dharwad and Mysore districts. There is greater concentration of Kurubas in these districts. That apart, regional variations if any are taken care of. Bellary and Dharwad districts were at the tail end of former Madras and Bombay

Presidencies. Thus they represent different administrative setup drawing political boundaries and other variations. Chitradurga and Mysore districts formed part of 'Old Mysore State' with native rulers, thus coming under a single administrative machinery which stood for progressive ideas and innovations like town planning, irrigation, and setting up industries.

With the states Re-organization in 1956 leading to the merger of Kannada speaking areas from Madras and Bombay Presidency to form New Mysore State, later on named as Karnataka, the 'horizontal solicarity' to use Srinivas's phrase, of many caste groups has come about. The Kurubas as now organized both politically, religiously and perhaps culturally, constituting about 7-8 per cent of the state's population is quite a vocal group. The traditional occupation of the caste, sheep rearing and blanket weaving are on the way out. They are catching up in formal education, so that we get doctors, engineers, lawyers, a number of officials and teachers at different levels. Also, the caste leaders are running a number of educational institutions at different places in the State.

There is a good deal of diversification of economic activities. Many of them own both wet and dry land in addition to garden plots. Economically they are not so bad. But they are striving to achieve even greater degree of economic well-being by way of organizing themselves to pressurise the government to extend or include them in the schedule. They do not like being included in the Backward classes, but would like 'reservation benefits' by securing ST tag. To this end they have started asserting that Kuruba community includes not merely Kurubas proper (caste) but also Kadu Kuruba, Betta Kuruba, Jenu Kuruba, Mullu Kuruba – the latter constituting tribals and are getting constitutional benefits under ST category. They are mostly assisted in this by the presence and developmental work undertaken by NGOs with government assistance.

Kadu Kurubas – including Betta Kuruba and Jenu Kuruba sub-division are found to inhabit forest area and living on fringe of forests

in Mysore and Coorg districts. We do not get them spread out in the state like Kurubas. Yet some Kurubas in far off districts of Chitradurga and Dharwad have returned themselves as Kadu Kurubas in our field data. This suggests a sustained effort on the part of Kurubas to lay claim to tribal status in near future perhaps.

Kadu Kurubas are still partly a food gathering and partly a food producing group. But the land owned by them is the government allotted land. Both dry land and little wet land which they cultivate in Hunsur and H.D.Kote taluks of Mysore district if saved from the depredations of wild animals, the crops harvested will last for a few weeks to couple of months. They have taken to settled cultivation recently since shifting cultivation is banned by the government. They did not cherish any ideas of private property and food was/is still shared by all people in the Hadis. Roots, tubers, greens from the forest supplement the food requirements of the tribals. They also hire out as wage labourers in P.W.D. road construction work, coffee estates in Coorg and of course work as agricultural coolies. There is no diversification of economic activities. The egalitarian values fostered by the tribals is an effective measure of moderation preventing disparities of classes and allied snobberies.

The study covers 601 Kadu Kuruba sample households, half of it drawn from various Hadis (Tribal settlements) in Hunsur taluk. The remaining 50 per cent come from H.D.Kote taluk, drawn from Antharasanthe and N.Begur area. Whatever formal education obtains in tribal area is the result of the institutions started by NGOs working in these taluks, with financial assistance from the government. There is not even a graduate leave alone a doctor, engineer or lawyer. There are a negligible number of them working as teachers in Anganwadis and primary schools. It is a far cry to expect any official class among Kadu Kurubas. The economic and educational backwardness of tribals in this part of India and Karnataka is only natural. For unlike the North East, Chotanagapur and elsewhere in the country no Christian

missionaries ever worked here. It is only in the last couple of decades, some NGOs have started working among them. So education and other facilities are a very recent phenomena here.

The Institution of family and marriage among the Kurubas and Kadu Kurubas highlight more of the differences than similarities. Arranged marriages and thus caste endogamy is a rule with all the attendant practices of dowry, elaborate rituals, linking different servicing castes, priests, on formal occasions like a wedding among the Kurubas. With the Kadu Kurubas, though tribal endogamy is in vogue, marriage by elopement; choice of spouse resting with partners is still popular. These days, the increased contact with neighboring Hindus has ushered in arranged marriages. But there are no elaborate rituals nor are marriage between close kin and kinship circle surrounding a marriage are visible among the tribals.

The structure of family among the Kurubas suggests degrees of jointness though many living in nuclear families long to live in joint family for the facilities, like security, mutual help it offers despite short comings like bickerings and conflicts. Among the Kadu Kurubas it is all nuclear family set up. Immediately after marriage, the young couples setup their own family. In-laws from both sides might occasionally visit but it seldom involves any authority being exercised by elders. Tribal women on the whole enjoy much more freedom than their Kuruba caste sisters. Also Kuruba informants do not shy away from indicating which caste-groups rank lower than them and those which are higher in the caste hierarchy. They endorse caste endogamy and are not in favour of inter-caste marriages.

The politico-religious organization among Kurubas and Kadu Kurubas add significant increments to caste-tribe differences. Kurubas are Hindus and most of the gods and goddesses they worship are drawn from the Hindu pantheon. They are saivites, but worshipping Vaishnavite gods and goddesses is not taboo. Family deity and family guru are part of their religious faith. Among Kadu Kurubas, we do

get innumerable deities which form Hindu pantheon. In addition, they have their own tribal deities. One particular deity 'Beeradevaru' – one of the names of Shiva, which is invariably worshipped by Kurubas, do not at all figure among Kadu Kuruba Tribals.

The Kurubas have managed to establish a religious Mutt and install a Jagadguru during early 1990s. This has wider implications both political and religious. It is in this we have to search for the unifying force. Diverse political interests can divide the Kuruba leaders and prevent them from coming together. But caste based religious centre with a guru can offset it by bringing them on a common religious platform to strive for the greater advancement of the caste in general. Thus politics and religion seem to be made for each other.

We do not come across anything similar to this among the Kadu Kurubas. They hardly have any professional priests leave alone Jagadgurus. As they live in small settlements of 10, 15, 20 families constituting a Hadi, and every body is busy eking out a living, there is no need for a religious convention of the kind that Kurubas hold in kaginele.

Among the Kurubas for quite a few decades formal political leaders have been there. Ever since the 1st General Elections in 1952, legislators, parliamentarians and ministers belonging to Kuruba caste have participated and worked at state and national levels. The list of leaders is quite impressive and compares favourably with any other caste group in the state. Right now, the Deputy Chief Minister of Karnataka is a Kuruba, while the state congress party President is also a Kuruba, Ex-MP and Ex-Minister.

In contrast only one Kadu Kuruba tribal from Coorg was a member of the state assembly in the recent past. Face to face with problems at the hands of government officials, more particularly forest officials, Kadu Kurubas are now aware of the importance of political organization. The NGOs are working towards creating general

awareness. Thus we notice the emergence of Budakattu Krishikara Sangha (BKS) and Vanavasi Mahila Sangha (VMS). Both these organizations are in the fore front; working to focus the attention of the government and public to the plight of the tribals for mere survival. However, no Kuruba leaders at any level have identified themselves with these people and their organizations.

Given the above facts caste-tribe differences can be identified and dealt with independently. But the tragedy with the government sponsored reservation policy over the decades has boiled down to populistic levels. Every caste-group and sub-castes in the country are staking their claims for reservation benefits and wants an SC or ST tag. In addition now 'Mandalism' catering to BC, OBC, SEBC and similar such categories drawn from sudra varna are claiming backward class status. The government has already conceded to group pressures and included different groups in SC and ST category. This apart several people have stealthily passed off for SC/ST and enjoyed the constitutional benefits by producing false caste certificates.

At this juncture in Indian history 'Protective discrimination' policy is becoming a bane since it is almost exclusively based on caste criteria. Thus castes are multiplying and playing havoc in every walk of life. 'United we stand, divided we fall' a historical truism, seem to be overwhelmingly in favour of divisive forces, the destiny of the nation as we embark upon 21st century is centred on competing for favours. A Buddha was born in Bihar way back and tried to nurse the society back to health from divisive forces and greed. Similarly a Basava was born in Karnataka and headed revolutionary reformist social movement. Likewise Guru Nanak, Kabir, Ravidas, a host of others were born in different parts of India and tried to reform the society. Close to India's freedom movement we had a Gandhi from Gujarat and Ambedkar from Maharastra. All these great sons of India understood human misery and tried to find solutions

But what is happening to-day even in the name of these great souls is something unimaginable. Part of the pathological conditions in our society can be streamlined by revamping the reservation policy. It should operate as time bound programme with built-in de-scheduling criteria. Caste-tribe criss-crossing for reservation benefits be put an end. More scientific method which includes a number of variables-besides caste-be evolved to identify the "most" deserving from the 'least' deserving on household and individual rather than group basis. The hope lies in the birth of great souls as in the past to steer our society. But it is a million-dollar proposition, hidden in the womb of future.

MYTHS OF ORIGIN OF KURUBAS

The myths and legends of the origin of Kuruba caste collected from informants while doing field work, a few sample versions are given below. The broad theme which runs through these narrations remain essentially the same. However, some minor variations add variety. Here are a few of them.

Myth-I In the beginning, a certain father had 5 sons. Four of them were doing agriculture, while the fifth son was a lousy fellow and he was nicknamed 'Vagabond padma'. One day the four brothers were engaged in ploughing the land, while padma was sitting whiling away his time doing nothing. Their mother carried food to the field, the four brothers had their lunch without inviting padma.

The mother, then collected the remaining food from the basket and served the leftover to the youngest son. This leftover food, all too delicious began overflowing the basket. At this sight, the elder sons became jealous and suspected that the mother has not been fair to them. They pressed the youngest brother to plough the land. As he did not know ploughing, by trial and error he ploughed over ant-hill. There emerged a flock of sheep from the site. Padma kept some sheep for himself and distributed some among his brothers. Thus he became the founding father of Kuruba caste.

Myth-II There was a certain stupid boy by name Kuruba. He was tending sheep when Lord Shiva and his consort Parvathi wanted to test his devotion and asked him to show them the Almighty. The boy simple showed the heap of 'sheep droppings' as Almighty. Shiva and Parvathi were supremely pleased at his innocence and devotion. They blessed him. There after this fellow becomes quite intelligent. Then he got married in the jungle and begot two sons. One son continued to tend sheep in jungle, thus became the progenitor of Kadu Kurubas. The other son migrates to village, selling woolen blankets. He gets married to village Headman's daughter and settled down in the village. He thus became the forerunner of Uru Kurubas.

Myth-III The genesis of Kuruba caste secrets are hidden in the Revana Siddeswara origin. Shanta Muthaiah and Beeralingeswara are the two pupils (shisyas) of Revana Siddeswara. These three created sheep and sheep rearing became the traditional occupation of Kurubas. Vagabond Padmanna and Hiriyanna (elder brother) contemporaries of Revanna Siddeswara were living in jungle. Padmanna, the lousy guy was engaged in sheep rearing and was wearing a woolen wristband (Unne Kankana) and his descendants became Unne Kankana Kuruba division. The elder brother (Hiriyanna) who was an agriculturist used to wear cotton-wrist-band (Hatti Kankana) and thus his descendants became Hatti Kankana Kuruba group. They were children of same father born to different mothers. They are thus half brother's and marriage is taboo between the two groups.

A. TABLES RELATING TO KURUBAS

1. Education and Occupation of Sample Households - Kurubas

Occupation / Education	Land Owner	Land Holder	Agricultural Labourers	Govt. Employee	Employee in Pvt. Firm	Petty Business	Others	Total
Illeterate	28 (03.65)	11 (01.83)	73 (12.14)	-	-	-	6 (00.99)	118 (19.63)
Read and Write	21 (02.49)	3 (00.49)	49 (08.15)	-		26 (04.32)	2 (00.33)	101 (16.80)
7th Standard	64 (10.64)	2 (00.33)	18 (02.99)	-	2 (00.33)	4 (00.66)	3 (00.49)	93 (15.47)
SSLC	54 (08.98)	-	2 (00.33)	1 (00.16)	22 (03.66)	5 (00.83)	-	84 (13.97)
PUC	41 (06.82)	-	-	5 (00.83)	14 (02.32)	2 (00.33)	-	62 (10.31)
Degree	8 (01.33)	-	-	35 (05.82)	8 (01.33)	-	-	51 (08.48)
Post Graduate	3 (00.49)	-	-	29 (04.82)	-	-	-	32 (05.32)
Technical Course	1 (00.16)	-	-	39 (06.48)	2 (00.33)	-	-	42 (06.98)
Professional degree	-	-	-	17 (02.82)	1 (00.16)	-	-	18 (02.99)
Total	220 (36.60)	16 (02.66)	142 (23.62)	126 (20.96)	49 (08.15)	37 (06.15)	11 (01.83)	601 (100.00)

Figures in Parenthesis indicate percentage

2. Agricultural Land Distribution and Water Sources - Kurubas

Agricultural Land Distribution / Water Sources	Wet Land Own	Dry Land Own	Wet Land Lease	Wet Land Share Cropping	Dry Land Lease	Dry Land Share Cropping	Others	Not Applicable	Total
Rain Water	-	133 (22.12)	-	-	61 (10.14)	32 (05.32)	2 (00.33)	-	228 (37.93)
Open Well	1 (00.16)	-	4 (00.66)	4 (00.66)	-	-	-	-	9 (01.49)
Tube Well	17 (02.82)	-	10 (01.66)	5 (00.83)	-	-	-	-	32 (05.32)
Canal	26 (04.32)	-	8 (01.33)	5 (00.83)	-	-	-	-	39 (06.48)
Tank	36 (05.99)	-	13 (02.16)	8 (01.33)	-	-	-	-	57 (09.48)
Stream	7 (01.16)	-	6 (00.99)	2 (00.33)	-	-	-	-	15 (0.249)
Not Applicable/ No Land	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	221 (36.77)
Total	87 (14.47)	133 (22.12)	41 (06.82)	24 (03.99)	61 (10.14)	32 (05.32)	2 (00.33)	221 (36.77)	601 (100.00)

Figures in Parenthesis Indicate Percentage

3. Agricultural Water source and the crops grown - Kurubas

Agricultural Water Source	Rain Water	Open Well	Tube Well	Canal	Tank	Steam	Not Applicable No Land	Total
Crops Grown								
Ragi/Jower	147 (24.45)	2 (00.33)	5 (00.83)	6 (00.99)	9 (01.49)	2 (00.33)	-	171 (28.45)
Paddy / Wheat	53 (08.81)	3 (00.49)	2 (00.33)	1 (00.16)	1 (00.16)	1 (00.16)	-	61 (10.14)
Sugar cane	-	-	8 (01.33)	12 (01.99)	4 (00.66)	2 (00.33)	-	26 (04.32)
Pulses	25 (04.15)	1 (00.16)	11 (01.83)	15 (02.49)	42 (06.98)	10 (01.66)	- -	104 (17.30)
Coffee / Spices	2 (00.33)	-	-	-	-	-	-	16 (00.33)
Not Applicable / No Land	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	221 (36.77)
Total	228 (37.93)	9 (01.49)	32 (05.32)	39 (06.48)	57 (09.48)	15 (02.49)	221 (36.77)	60 (100.00)

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentage

4. Education and Opinion Regarding Help Needed - Kurubas

Educational Attainments / Opinion Regarding help Needed	Illiterate	Read & Write	Seventh Standard	SSLC	PUC	Degree	Post Graduate	Technical Course	Professional Degree	Total
By way of giving Backward Class Tag & Reservation	35 (0.5.82)	23 (03.82)	20 (13.32)	51 (08.48)	12 (01.99)	5 (00.83)	3 (00.49)	5 (00.83)	2 (00.33)	156 (25.95)
By extending Financial Assistance	22 (03.66)	24 (03.99)	41 (06.82)	9 (01.49)	28 (04.65)	3 (00.49)	1 (00.16)	4 (00.66)	2 (00.33)	134 (22.29)
By considering Kurubas as Tribes	26 (04.32)	10 (01.66)	8 (01.33)	18 (02.99)	20 (03.32)	43 (07.15)	28 (04.65)	33 (05.49)	14 (02.32)	200 (32.27)
Do not know/ can't say	32 (05.32)	42 (06.98)	23 (03.82)	6 (00.99)	2 (00.33)	- -	- -	- -	- -	105 (17.47)
No response	3 (00.49)	2 (00.33)	1 (00.16)	-	-	-	-	-	-	6 (00.99)
Total	118 (19.63)	101 (16.80)	93 (15.47)	84 (13.97)	62 (10.31)	51 (08.48)	32 (05.32)	42 (06.98)	18 (02.99)	601 (100.00)

Figures in Parenthesis Indicate Percentage

5. Occupation and Membership in Co-Operatives/Bank - Kurubas

Membership in Co-Op/Bank ..... Occupation	Member/ A/c Holder	Director	Member Advisory Board	A/c Holder & Debtor	Past Debtor	Purchase Ration Items	Not Applicable No. A/c	Total
Land Owner	65 (10.81)	11 (01.83)	8 (01.33)	82 (13.64)	7 (01.16)	41 (06.82)	6 (00.99)	220 (36.60)
Land Holder	6 (00.99)	-	-	-	1 (00.16)	7 (01.16)	2 (00.33)	16 (02.66)
Agricultural Labour	3 (00.49)	-	-	23 (03.82)	4 (00.66)	106 (17.63)	6 (00.99)	142 (23.62)
Government Employee	72 (11.98)	-	2 (00.33)	32 (05.32)	1 (00.16)	12 (01.99)	7 (01.16)	126 (20.96)
Employee in Pvt. Firm	26 (04.32)	1 (00.16)	1 (00.16)	-	2 (00.33)	14 (02.32)	5 (00.83)	49 (08.15)
Petty Business	6 (00.99)	1 (00.16)	-	16 (02.66)	11 (01.83)	3 (00.49)	-	37 (06.15)
Others	9 (01.49)	-	-	2 (00.33)	-	-	-	11 (01.83)
Total	187 (31.11)	13 (02.16)	11 (01.83)	155 (25.79)	26 (04.32)	183 (30.44)	26 (02.66)	601 (100.00)

Figures in Parenthesis Indicate Percentage

6. Kurubas in Karnataka Districts and their Awareness of Tribal Groups

Karnataka Districts ..... Tribal Groups	Mysore	Dharward	Bellary	Chitradurga	Total
Kadu Kurubas	50 (08.31)	40 (06.65)	35 (05.82)	38 (06.32)	163 (27.12)
Betta Kurubas	9 (01.49)	13 (02.16)	4 (00.66)	8 (01.33)	34 (05.65)
Jenu Kurubas	8 (01.33)	2 (00.33)	23 (03.82)	18 (02.99)	51 (08.48)
Mullu Kurubas	7 (01.16)	7 (01.16)	3 (00.49)	2 (00.33)	19 (02.99)
All the above Groups	56 (09.31)	71 (11.81)	70 (11.64)	72 (11.98)	269 (44.75)
Don't know/not Applicable	15 (02.49)	18 (02.99)	15 (02.49)	17 (02.82)	65 (10.81)
Total	145 (24.12)	151 (25.12)	150 (24.95)	155 (25.79)	601 (100.00)

Figures in Parenthesis Indicate Percentage

7. Political Awareness/Participation & Kurubas in Karnataka Districts

Political Awareness / Karnataka Districts	Member of Political Party	Sympathiser of Political Party	Office Bearer of Political Party	Supporter of Political Party	Attended Meetings of Political Parties	Attended Rellies of Political Parties	Participated in Political Party Procession	Participated in Morchas	No Response	Total
Mysore	9 (01.49)	24 (03.99)	2 (00.33)	34 (05.65)	10 (01.66)	2 (00.33)	12 (01.99)	3 (00.49)	49 (08.15)	145 (24.12)
Dharwad	17 (02.82)	29 (04.82)	2 (00.33)	41 (06.82)	24 (03.99)	8 (01.33)	1 (00.16)	5 (00.83)	24 (03.99)	151 (25.12)
Bellary	13 (02.16)	17 (02.82)	4 (00.66)	29 (04.82)	14 (02.32)	5 (00.83)	15 (02.49)	6 (00.99)	47 (07.82)	150 (24.95)
Chitradurga	13 (02.16)	21 (03.49)	4 (00.66)	38 (06.32)	17 (02.82)	9 (01.49)	5 (00.83)	4 (00.66)	44 (07.32)	155 (25.79)
Total	52 (05.32)	91 (15.14)	12 (01.99)	142 (23.62)	65 (10.81)	24 (03.99)	33 (05.49)	18 (02.99)	164 (27.28)	601 (100.00)

Figures in Parenthesis indicate percentage

8. Educational Attainments and Opinion about Political Leadership - Kurubas

Educational Attainments / Opinion Regarding Political Leadership	Illiterate	Read & Write	Seventh Standard	SSLC	PUC	Degree	Post Graduate	Technical Course	Professional Degree	Total
Help Organizing Kurubas	21 (03.49)	12 (01.99)	9 (01.49)	12 (01.99)	2 (00.33)	14 (01.32)	11 (01.83)	4 (00.66)	5 (00.83)	90 (14.97)
Brought Political Awakening	-	-	-	22 (03.66)	6 (00.99)	16 (02.66)	9 (01.49)	2 (00.33)	4 (00.66)	59 (09.81)
Run Educational Institutions	3 (00.49)	4 (00.66)	2 (00.33)	3 (00.49)	2 (00.33)	7 (01.16)	8 (01.33)	10 (01.66)	6 (00.99)	45 (07.48)
Helped Establish Hostels	8 (01.33)	5 (00.83)	3 (00.49)	8 (01.33)	6 (00.99)	9 (01.49)	4 (00.66)	18 (02.99)	3 (00.49)	64 (10.64)
Organized Religious Institutions	2 (00.33)	1 (00.16)	1 (00.16)	-	-	1 (00.16)	-	1 (00.16)	-	6 (00.99)
Represented Kurubas Effectively	30 (04.99)	21 (03.49)	19 (03.16)	14 (02.32)	17 (02.82)	3 (00.49)	-	7 (00.16)	-	111 (18.46)
Mere Politicians	13 (02.16)	12 (01.99)	9 (01.49)	10 (01.16)	18 (02.99)	1 (00.16)	-	-	-	63 (10.48)
Don't Know/ Can't say	26 (04.32)	18 (02.99)	13 (02.16)	-	-	-	-	-	-	57 (09.48)
No Response	15 (02.49)	28 (04.65)	37 (06.15)	15 (02.49)	11 (01.83	-	-	-	- -	106 (17.63)
Total	118 (19.63)	101 (16.80)	93 (15.47)	84 (13.97)	62 (10.31)	51 (08.48)	32	42 (06.98)	18 (02.99)	601 (100.00)

Figures in Parenthesis Indicate Percentage

9. Occupation and Opinion regarding formal Education - Kurubas

Occupation / Opinion about Formal Education	Land Owner	Land Holder	Agricultural Labourers	Govt. Employee	Employee in Pvt. Firm	Petty Business	Others	Total
Education brings Higher Social Status	98 (16.30)	4 (00.66)	33 (05.49)	28 (04.65)	18 (02.99)	7 (01.16)	3 (00.49)	191 (31.78)
Provides Economic Security	75 (12.47)	3 (00.49)	62 (10.31)	49 (08.15)	16 (02.66)	11 (01.83)	2 (00.33)	218 (36.27)
Helps Political Mobilization	-	4 (00.66)	-	-	2 (00.33)	3 (00.49)	1 (00.16)	10 (01.66)
Helps achieve Progress	10 (01.66)	-	14 (02.32)	25 (02.49)	8 (01.33)	6 (00.99)	-	63 (10.48)
Symbol of Modernization	28 (04.65)	-	22 (03.66)	17 (02.82)	5 (00.83)	2 (00.33)	-	74 (12.31)
Other Advantages	3 (00.49)	-	3 (00.49)	2 (00.33)	-	1 (00.16)	-	9 (01.49)
Don't know/ Can't say	4 (00.66)	3 (00.49)	4 (00.66)	2 (00.33)	-	3 (00.49)	3 (00.49)	19 (03.16)
No Response	2 (00.33)	2 (00.33)	4 (00.66)	3 (00.49)	-	4 (00.66)	2 (00.33)	17 (02.82)
Total	220 (36.60)	16 (02.66)	142 (23.62)	126 (20.96)	49 (08.15)	37 (06.15)	11 (01.83)	601 (100.00)

Figures in Parenthesis indicate percentage

10. Kurubas in Karnataka Districts and their Possessions

Possessions / Karnataka Districts	Bullocks/ Cart	Cattle	Sheep/ Goats	Agricultural Implement	Tractor/ Jeep/Car	Motor Cycle/ Moped	Radio/TV/ Taperecorder/ VCP/VCR	Clock/ Watch/ Bicycle	Furniture	Pumpset	Total
Mysore	32	48	15	45	-	16	48	56	31	4	295
Dharwad	65	58	39	66	19	15	103	90	64	27	546
Bellary	56	43	21	48	4	18	71	65	36	15	377
Chitradurga	46	58	28	45	14	26	116	114	83	11	541
Total	199	207	103	204	37	75	338	325	214	57	1759

B. TABLES RELATING TO KADU KURUBAS

1. Tribal Population in sample areas and Age and Sex Composition

Tribal areas and	Kadu/Betta Kuruba			Jenu Kuruba					
Sex Composition	Antharasanthe	N. Begur	Hunsur	Antharasanthe	N. Begur	Hunsur	MEN	WOMEN	TOTAL
Age Composition									
Less than 5 years	8	48	1	77	25	130	151	138	289
Between 5 & 20 years	30	188	9	225	93	585	593	537	1130
Between 21 & 35 years	26	124	8	176	58	391	408	375	783
Between 36 & 50 years	8	72	4	55	32	218	204	185	389
Between 51 & 65 years	4	22	3	24	18	78	78	71	149
66 or more years	2	21	2	17	6	48	50	46	96
Total	78	475	27	574	232	1450	1484	1352	2836

2. Tribal Population in sample areas and Age and Sex Composition

Sample Tribal Households	Antarasanthe		N. Begur		Hunsur		Total
	Kadu/Betta Kuruba	Jenu Kuruba	Kadu/Betta Kuruba	Jenu Kuruba	Kadu/Betta Kuruba	Jenu Kuruba	
Occupation							
Agricultural Coolie/ Causal Labour	19 (03.16)	72 (11.98)	81 (13.47)	30 (04.99)	5 (00.83)	114 (18.96)	321 (53.41)
Basket Making	-	2 (00.33)	-	-	-	1 (00.16)	3 (00.49)
Honey Collection	-	50 (08.31)	1 (00.16)	9 (01.49)	-	162 (26.95)	222 (36.93)
Wax Collection	-	4 (00.66)	1 (00.16)	12 (01.99)	-	6 (00.99)	23 (05.32)
Collection of minor forest produces	-	3 (00.49)	16 (02.66)	-	1 (00.16)	12 (01.99)	32 (03.82)
Total	19 (03.16)	131 (21.79)	99 (16.47)	51 (08.48)	6 (00.99)	295 (49.08)	601 (100.00)

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentage

2. Tribal areas/Tribes and Assistance received from Government

	Antharasanthe		N. Begur		Hunsur		
Tribal areas/ Tribes Government assistance received	Kadu/Betta Kuruba	Jenu Kuruba	Kadu/Betta Kuruba	Jenu Kuruba	Kadu/Betta Kuruba	Jenu Kuruba	Total
Seeds	1 (00.16)	5 (00.83)	4 (00.66)	1 (00.16)	1 (00.16)	10 (01.66)	22 (03.66)
Fertilizer	-	1 (00.16)	-	1 (00.16)	2 (00.33)	4 (00.66)	8 (01.33)
Bullocks	2 (00.33)	6 (00.99)	13 (02.16)	2 (00.33)	1 (00.16)	56 (09.31)	80 (13.31)
Agricultural implements	-	2 (00.33)	-	1 (00.16)	-	8 (01.33)	11 (01.83)
Live stock	3 (00.49)	36 (05.99)	52 (08.65)	43 (07.15)	-	86 (14.30)	220 (36.60)
Loan subsidy	1 (00.16)	1 (00.16)	5 (00.83)	- -	- -	10 (01.66)	17 (02.82)
Not applicable/ Not received	12 (01.99)	80 (13.31)	25 (03.99)	3 (00.49)	2 (00.33)	121 (20.13)	243 (40.13)
Total	19 (03.16)	131 (21.79)	99 (16.47)	51 (08.48)	6 (00.99)	295 (49.08)	601 (100.00)

Figures in paranthesis indicate percentage

4. Tribal groups and Land possession in sample areas

Land Possession	DRY LAND			WET LAND			WASTE LAND			No Land	Total
	Anthara santhe	N. Begur	Hunsur	Anthara santhe	N. Begur	Hunsur	Anthara santhe	N. Begur	Hunsur		
Tribal Groups											
Kadu/Betta Kuruba	11 (01.83)	54 (08.98)	4 (00.66)	-	1 (00.16)	-	-	-	-	54 (08.98)	124 (10.63)
Jenu Kuruba	45 (07.48)	29 (04.82)	178 (29.61)	6 (00.99)	1 (00.16)	27 (04.49)	-	-	6 (00.99)	185 (30.78)	477 (79.36)
Total	56 (09.31)	83 (13.81)	182 (30.28)	6 (00.99)	2 (00.33)	27 (04.49)	-	-	6 (00.99)	239 (39.76)	601 (100.00)

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentage

5. Nature of housing in sample tribal groups and area

Tribal areas	Antarasanthe		N. Begur		Hunsur		Total
	Kadu/Betta Kuruba	Jenu Kuruba	Kadu/Betta Kuruba	Jenu Kuruba	Kadu/Betta Kuruba	Jenu Kuruba	
Housing							
Live in Govt. built Pakka house	-	7 (01.16)	1 (00.16)	-	-	4 (00.66)	12 (01.99)
Live in Govt. built Kachcha house	12 (01.99)	78 (12.97)	84 (13.97)	45 (07.48)	4 (00.66)	223 (37.10)	446 (74.20)
Live in Govt. built Thatchmud house	-	-	-	2 (00.33)	-	2 (00.33)	4 (00.66)
Live in Pakka house built by self	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Live in Kachcha house built by self	-	4 (00.66)	5 (00.83)	-	-	2 (00.33)	11 (01.83)
Live in Thatchmud house built by self	5 (00.83)	39 (06.48)	6 (00.99)	4 (00.66)	1 (00.16)	50 (08.31)	105 (17.47)
Not applicable/ No house	2 (00.33)	3 (00.49)	3 (00.49)	-	1 (00.16)	14 (02.32)	23 (03.82)
Total	19 (03.16)	131 (21.79)	99 (16.47)	51 (08.48)	6 (00.99)	295 (049.08)	601 (100.00)

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentage

6. Tribal children in Educational Institutions and facilities availed

Tribal Children in Schools & Colleges	Nursery School	Primary School	Ashram School	Middle School	High School	Junior College	College	Post-Graduate Education	No	Total &
Facilities utilized										
Residence	4 (00.66)	5 (00.83)	9 (01.49)	8 (01.33)	3 (00.49)	2 (00.33)	1 (00.16)	- -	- -	32 (05.32)
Scholarship	-	-	-	7 (01.16)	3 (00.49)	2 (00.33)	1 (00.16)	-	-	13 (02.16)
Uniform	-	4	31 (00.66)	24 (05.15)	12 (03.99)	- (01.99)	-	-	-	71 (11.81)
Residence uniform / Scholarship	-	-	75 (12.47)	63 (10.68)	26 (04.32)	-	-	- (27.28)	-	164
Residence & Scholarship	-	-	4 (00.66)	5 (00.83)	6 (00.99)	-	-	- (02.49)	-	15
Residence & Uniform	-	-	63 (10.48)	40 (06.65)	19 (03.16)	-	-	- (20.29)	-	122
Scholarship & Uniform	-	-	12 (01.99)	22 (03.66)	13 (02.16)	-	-	- (07.82)	-	47
No Facilities	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	137 (22.79)	137 (22.79)
Total	4 (00.66)	9 (01.49)	194 (32.27)	169 (28.11)	82 (13.64)	4 (00.66) (00.33)	2	-	137 (22.79)	601 (100.00)

Figures in parenthesis indicate percantage

7. Hurdles to Tribal people and Tribal representation in Local Bodies

Tribal Representation / Hurdles to Tribal People	Village Panchayat	Mandal Panchayat	Zilla Parishat	MLA/MP	Minister	Ex-MLA Ex-MP	Ex-Minister	No one in Bodies	Total
Forest Officers	442 (73.54)	-	-	-	1 (00.16)	-	-	82 (13.64)	525 (87.35)
Money Lenders	6 (00.99)	1 (00.16)	-	-	-	-	-	2 (00.33)	9 (01.49)
Business Community	1 (00.16)	-	-	-	-	-	-	1 (00.16)	2 (00.33)
Contractors	1 (00.16)	-	1 (00.16)	-	-	-	-	4 (00.66)	6 (00.99)
Non-Tribal Villagers	1 (00.16)	2 (00.33)	-	-	-	-	-	2 (00.33)	5 (00.83)
Not applicable No hurdle	29 (04.82)	-	-	-	-	-	-	25 (04.15)	54 (08.98)
Total	480 (79.86)	3 (00.49)	1 (00.16)	-	1 (00.16)	-	-	116 (19.30)	601 (100.00)

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentage

8. Occupation of Tribal groups and their Possessions

Possessions / Occupations	Bullocks	Sheep/ Goat	Poultry	Cart	Cattle	Others	Not applicable	Total
Agricultural Coolie/ Causal Labour	71 (11.81)	20 (03.32)	33 (05.49)	6 (00.99)	57 (09.48)	6 (00.99)	128 (21.29)	321 (53.41)
Basket Making	-	1 (00.16)	-	-	2 (00.33)	-	-	3 (00.49)
Honey Collection	9 (01.49)	1 (00.16)	183 (30.44)	2 (00.33)	23 (03.82)	4 (00.66)	-	222 (36.93)
Wax Collection	-	3 (00.49)	5 (00.83)	-	7 (01.16)	4 (00.66)	4 (00.66)	23 (03.82)
Collection of minor forest produces	-	6 (00.99)	14 (02.32)	-	10 (01.66)	2 (00.33)	-	32 (05.32)
Total	80 (13.31)	31 (05.15)	235 (39.10)	8 (01.33)	99 (10.47)	16 (02.66)	132 (21.96)	601 (100.00)

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentage

9. Education of Tribal Respondents and their Awareness

Awareness of Reservation Facilities / Education of Respondents	Education	Political Bodies	Employ-ment	Education & Politics	Education & Employ-ment	Pol. Bodies & Employ-ment	Education Politics & Emplmt.	Don't know/ Can't say	Total
Read & Write	7 (01.16)	1 (00.16)	-	12 (01.99)	3 (00.49)	-	13 (02.16)	72 (11.98)	108 (17.79)
Middle School	16 (02.66)	3 (00.49)	1 (00.16)	18 (02.99)	4 (00.66)	-	11 (01.83)	67 (11.14)	120 (19.96)
High School	6 (00.99)	9 (01.49)	4 (00.66)	12 (01.99)	9 (01.49)	2 (00.33)	38 (06.32)	43 (07.15)	123 (20.46)
College/Technical Education	-	1 (00.16)	-	1 (00.16)	2 (00.33)	-	3 (00.49)	-	7 (01.16)
Illiterate	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	243 (40.43)	243 (40.43)
Total	29 (04.82)	14 (02.32)	5 (00.83)	43 (07.15)	18 (02.99)	2 (00.33)	65 (10.81)	425 (70.71)	601 (100.00)

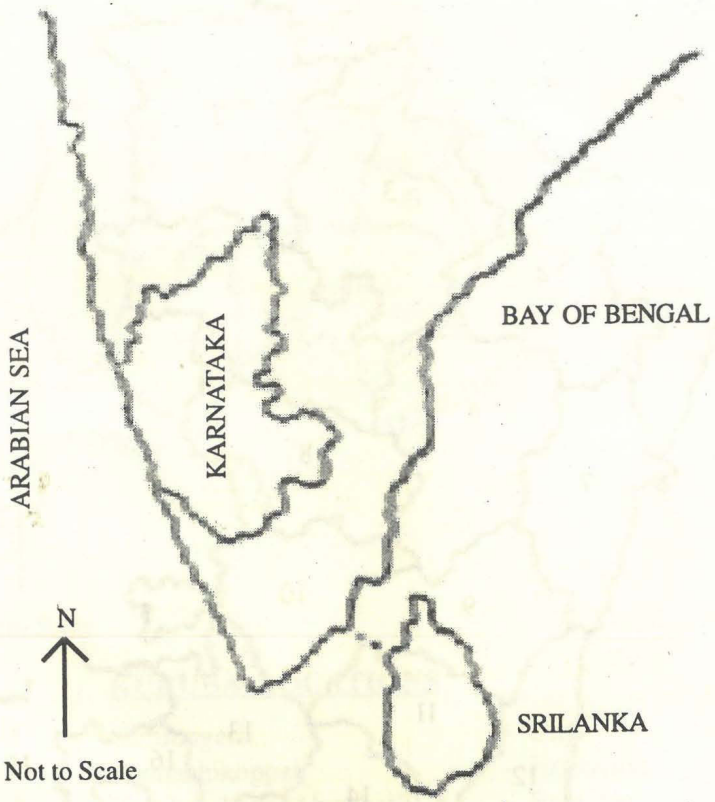
Figures in parenthesis indicate percentage

10. Opinion of Tribal Respondents regarding change and Tribal Welfare

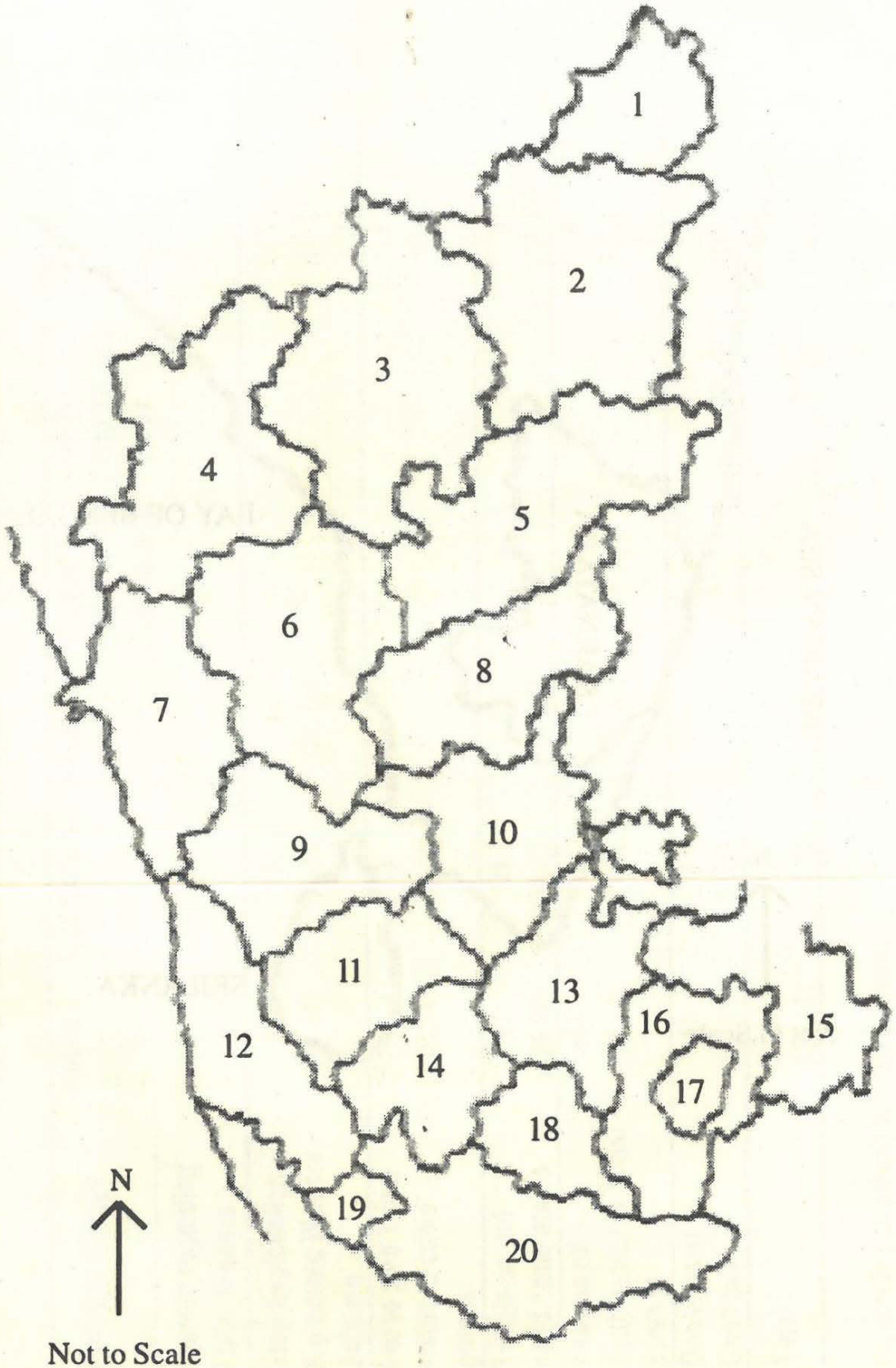
Desire to change / Opinion regarding Tribal Welfare	Habits	Occupation	Values	Acquiring Caste Components	By joining Uru Kuruba stock	Not interested in change	Don't know/ Can't say	Total
Stop Exploitation & promote Welfare Scheme	46 (07.65)	56 (09.31)	1 (00.16)	-	-	2 (00.33)	7 (01.16)	112 (18.63)
Not to give Tribal status to caste groups	51 (08.48)	33 (05.49)	-	-	-	1 (00.16)	12 (01.99)	97 (16.13)
Tribals do not need caste status	42 (06.98)	29 (04.82)	5 (00.83)	-	-	3 (00.49)	19 (03.16)	98 (16.30)
Passing off dettrimental to Tribal survival	64 (10.64)	72 (11.98)	4 (00.66)	-	-	4 (00.66)	26 (04.32)	170 (28.28)
Don't know/ Can't say	28 (04.65)	8 (01.33)	-	-	2 (00.33)	1 (00.16)	85 (14.14)	124 (20.63)
Total	231 (38.43)	198 (32.94)	10 (01.66)	-	2 (00.33)	11 (01.83)	149 (24.79)	601 (100.00)

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentage

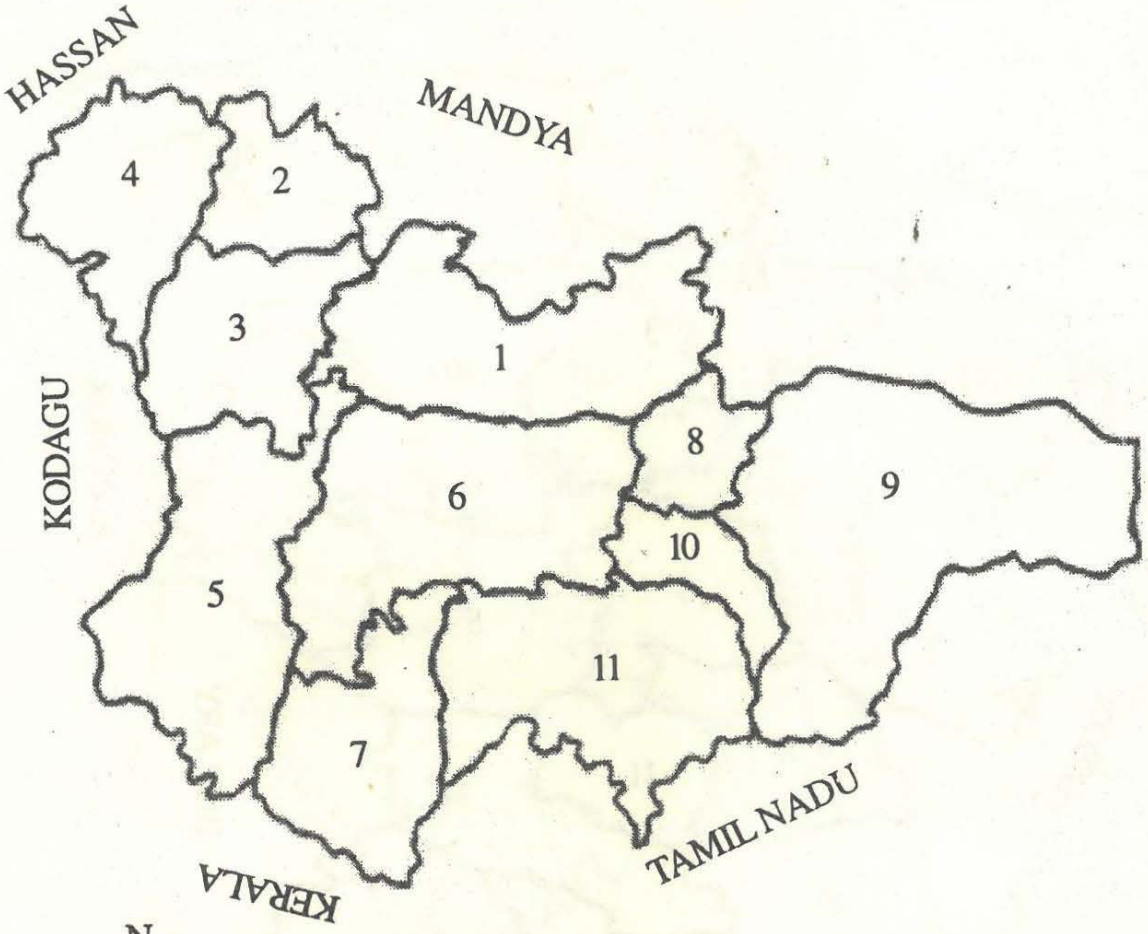
POSITION OF KARNATAKA IN SOUTH INDIA



KARNATAKA STATE AND DISTRICTS



MYSORE DISTRICT WITH TALUKS

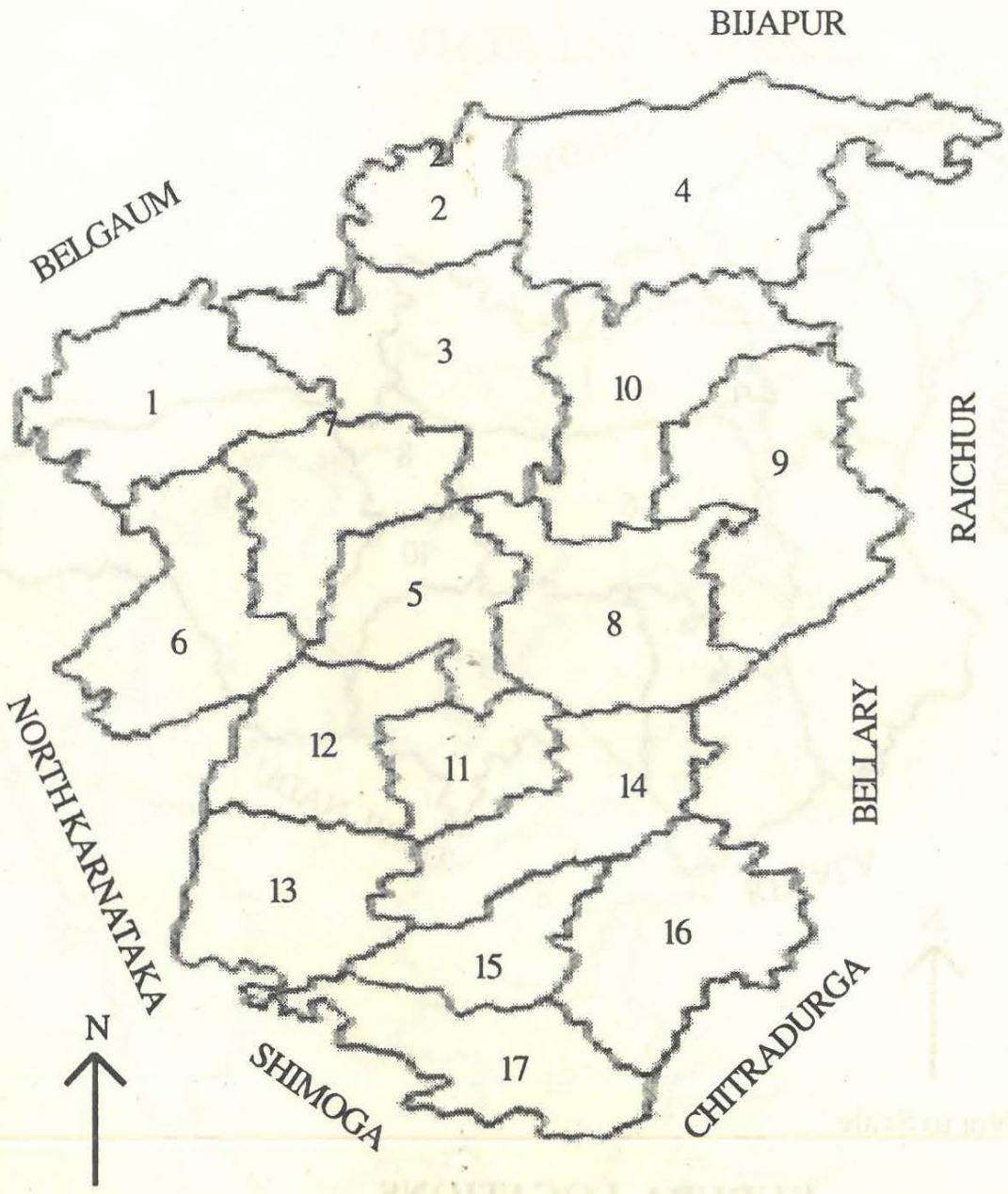


Not to Scale

KURUBA LOCATIONS

1.	Kurubageri	- City
2.	Thonachikoppal	- Extension
3.	Kurubarahalli (Alanahalli)	- Extension
4.	Hosabandi Keri	- City
5.	Siddaramana Hundi	- Village
6.	Basavanapura & Amachavadi	- "
7.	Kalale	- "
8.	Kalana Hundi	- "
9.	Gandhana Halli	- "

DHARWAD DISTRICT WITH TALUKS

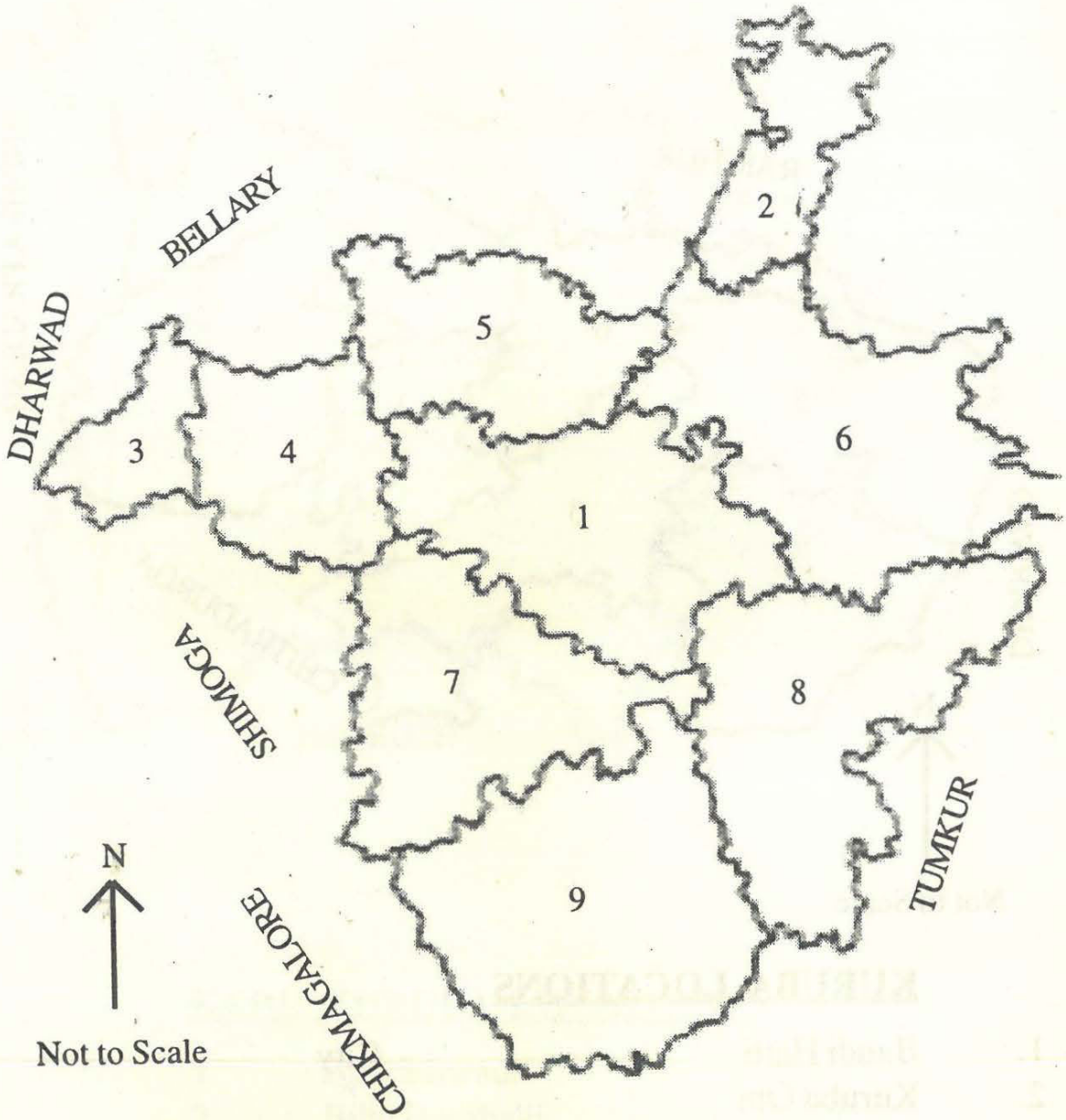


Not to Scale

KURUBA LOCATIONS

1. Dharward	- City	8. Hebsur	- Village
2. Gadag	- "	9. Heelada Halli	- "
3. Hubli	- "	10. Kanakapura	- "
4. Amminbhavi	- Village	11. Medleri	- "
5. Amargol	- "	12. Navilur	- "
6. Byahatti	- "	13. Udagatti	- "
7. Chikkalingada Halli	- "	14. Huailgol	- "

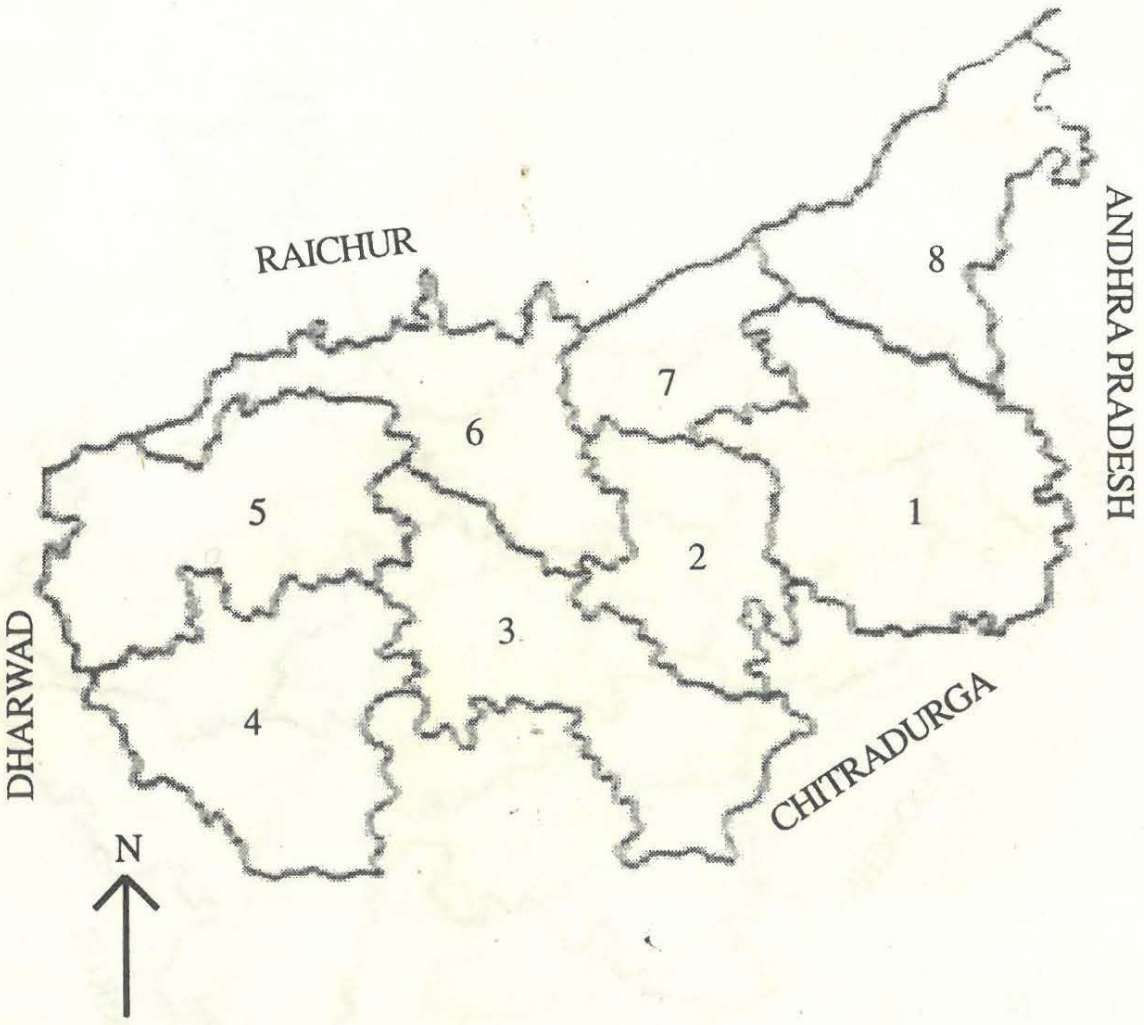
CHITRADURGA DISTRICT WITH TALUKS



KURUBA LOCATIONS

1.	Chitradurga	- District Head Quarters
2.	Davanagere	- City Taluk Head Qtrs.
3.	Harihara	- Town Taluk Head Qtrs.
4.	Hosadurga	- "
5.	Bilichodu	- Village
6.	Banuvalli	- "
7.	Harthikote	- "
8.	Lokikere	- "

BELLARY DISTRICT WITH TALUKS

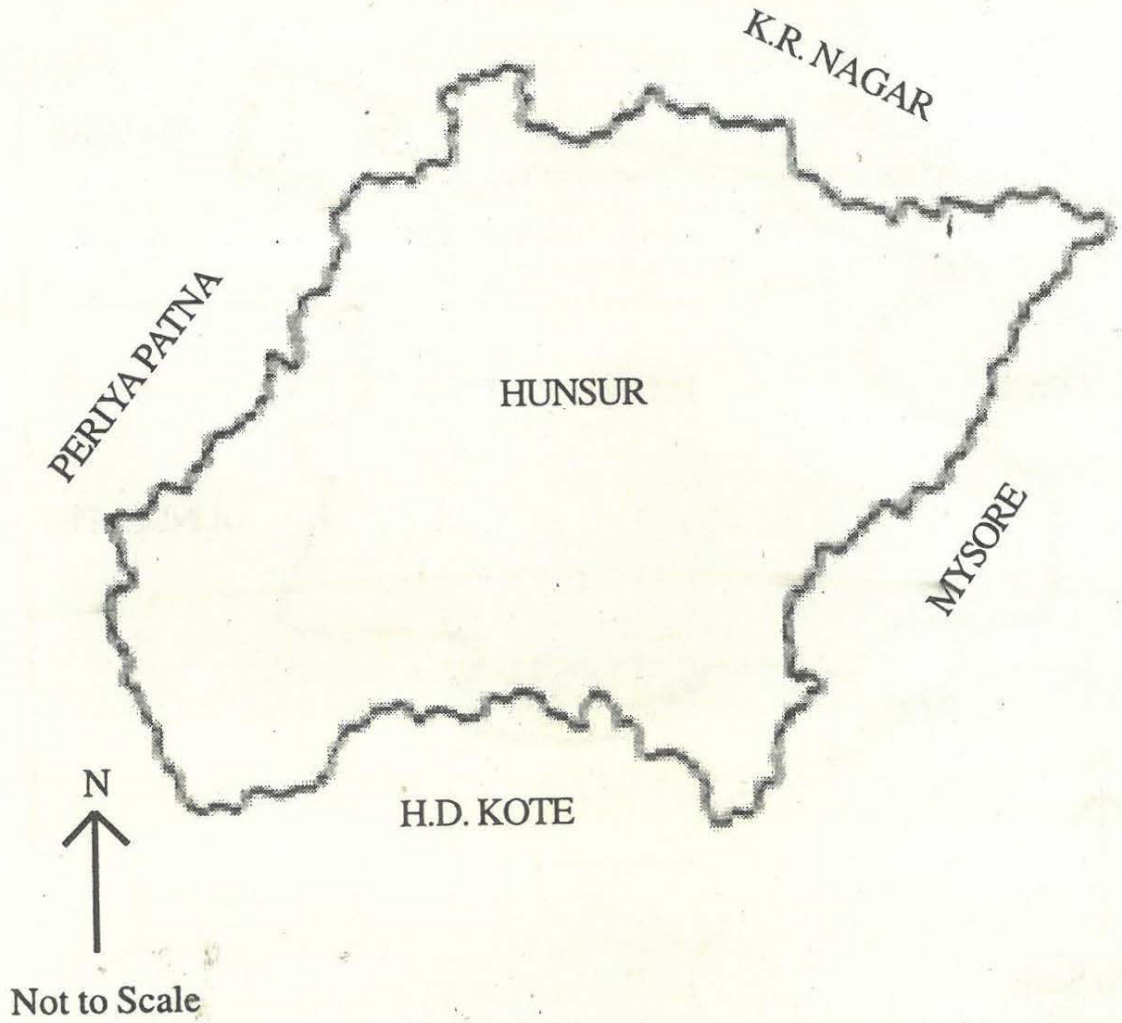


Not to Scale

KURUBA LOCATIONS

1.	Bandi Hatti	- City
2.	Kuruba Oni	- "
3.	Hospet, Kuruba Oni	- Town
4.	Patel Nagar	- Extension
5.	Hoovina Hadagali	- Taluk Head Quarters
6.	Kamalapura	- Village
7.	Krishna Nagar	- "
8.	Mylara	- "
9.	Hosahalli	- "
10.	Hire Hadagali	- Town
11.	Uchchangidurga	- Village
12.	Voddu	- "

HUNSUR TALUK

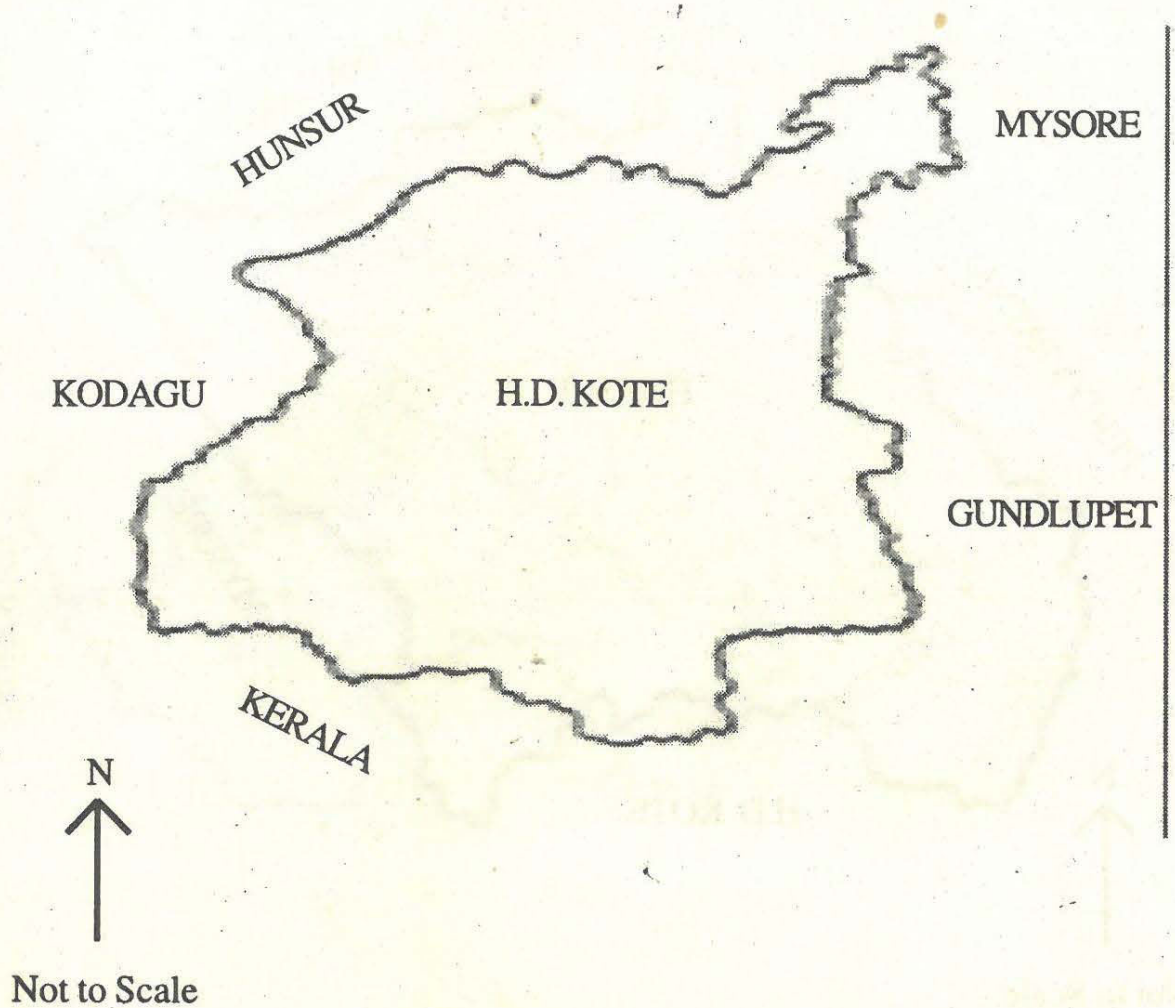


Not to Scale

KADU KURUBA LOCATIONS

1. Bharathwadi
2. Bille Hosahalli
3. Bettada Hadi
4. Chikka Hejjur
5. Harala Halli
6. Iyyanakere
7. Kappana Katte
8. Kere Hadi
9. Kolavige
10. Nerala Kuppe 'A'
11. Nerala Kuppe 'B'
12. Veerana Hosalli

H.D. KOTE TALUK



Not to Scale

KADU KURUBA LOCATIONS

	N. Begur Area		Antharasathe Area
1.	Brahmagiri	1.	Hunase Kuppe 'A'
2.	Shile Masti Hadi	2.	Hunase Kuppe 'B'
3.	Devana Hadi	3.	Karapura Hadi
4.	Donne Madana Hadi	4.	Kere Hadi
5.	Elichi Katte	5.	Malada Hadi
6.	Hosahalli	6.	Manche Gowdana Hadi
7.	Jagana Kote	7.	Seegur Hadi
8.	Kempana Hadi		
9.	Malada Hadi		
10.	Rajapura		

a) Kadu Kuruba Creche Children in the play ground

b) Kadu Kuruba School Children & their future dreams

c) Women & Children participating in a Ceremony

d) Invoking Ancestor Spirit

e) Lathi - Wielding Forest Department Officers

f) Tribals Dharna Against Displacement from Forest

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		6.	New Horizons and Scheduled Castes, Ashish, New Delhi, 1984.
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Prof. C. Parvathamma is a well known academic and writer particularly in the field of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work. Her clarity in thinking in social development is far reaching. She advocates reservation only for the needy and it should not be a permanent feature. It kills the creativity and self-respect in the persons who depends on reservation permanently. Now, for benefits the race for reservation is increasing. Several strong and large communities are making their efforts to influence the Governments to get into the scheduled category. The author in her book "Reservation: a Pie in the Sky" expressed her surprise and shock that castes and communities are claiming as tribes even after several decades of reservation facilities.

- Publisher